



Thursday, October 5, 2017

'YOU MAY NEVER BE RELEASED', JUDGE TELLS EVIL KILLER



Aaron Barley – 'inexplicable'

A DOWN-AND-OUT cocaine addict who tried to murder a businessman after slaying the victim's wife and 13-year-old son was yesterday (Wednesday) jailed for at least 30 years.

The judge, Mrs Justice Carr, warned that was the earliest Aaron Barley could be considered for parole in his life sentence and added: "You may never be released."

Tracey Wilkinson and her 47-year-old husband Peter fed, financed and employed Aaron Barley after she took pity on the homeless man after seeing him sheltering in a cardboard box outside a supermarket in Stourbridge in March last year.

Tracey Wilkinson – a former British Latin American ballroom dancing champion paid for this act of compassion with both her life and that of her 13-year-old son Pierce.

The 24-year-old, with a history of violence, pleaded guilty to the two murders when he appeared at Birmingham Crown Court this week.

Tracey and Peter Wilkinson's daughter Lydia, a student, giving her victim impact statement, looked at the defendant and told him: "Aaron my parents helped you. You repaid them with destruction and heartbreak."

Obliterated

"You have obliterated my life, murdered half my family, very nearly all of it, and for this I will never forgive you."

He had previously admitted the attempted murder of 50-year-old volunteer charity worker Mrs Wilkinson's husband Peter, aged 47. Mrs Wilkinson had taken Barley to an addiction clinic in Lye where

she had been helped to overcome a drink problem and Mr Wilkinson had found him a labouring job at a business he ran in Wales. But Barley was sacked when drugs sent him 'off the rails' within a few months of him starting work.

He also lost a flat found for him by the Wilkinson family who then, inexplicably, became the target of his hatred. One theory is that Barley may have seen the cancelling of his mobile phone contract, which they paid for him, as the final break between them.

On March 30 he lay in wait armed with a knife in the back garden of their Greyhound Lane home until Mr Wilkinson took the family dog for a walk, crept upstairs where he stabbed Mrs Wilkinson and her son. He ambushed Mr Wilkinson, then stole the family Land Rover Discovery which he crashed in nearby Norton Road when chased by police.

ATTACK

Arrest after boy is stabbed in stomach

A TEENAGER has been arrested after a schoolboy was stabbed in the stomach in Rowley Regis.

Police were called to an alleyway off Throne Crescent at 6.40pm on Tuesday.

The 15-year-old victim was taken to hospital but officers said his injuries are not thought to be life threatening.

Another teenager has been arrested in connection with the incident.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said: "Police have arrested a teenager following a stabbing in which another lad was injured. Officers were called following reports of a disturbance in an alleyway. A 15-year-old boy has been taken to hospital to be treated for an injury to his stomach."

SPORT

New foundation in honour of Duncan

A FOUNDATION to help young people in the borough with sports training is being set up in memory of famous Dudley footballer Duncan Edwards.

The Duncan Edwards Foundation is the brainchild of Rose Cook, who wrote and directed a documentary about the England and Manchester United star, who died as a result of the Munich air disaster in 1958.

● Film premiere – page 2

POLICE

Search for Natalie at nature reserve

THE search for missing Natalie Putt, who disappeared 14 years ago, has taken a new turn with police divers searching pools in the Cotwall End Nature Reserve, close to where she lived.

Detectives started their search of El-lowes Hall Wood in Lower Gornal on Monday after 'further credible information' was received.

INSIDE

DOREEN, GOT A NEW DVD, AY I



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Council price hike will hit 'multiple' stallholders CONCERN OVER MARKET'S FUTURE

FEARS have been raised over the future of a weekly Halesowen street market as rent fees have been increased by Dudley Council.

The local authority is charging traders for each stall they run rather than a single charge for multiple stalls and bosses say the move has been brought in to ensure fairness for all traders.

But local councillors fear what if could mean for the future of the High Street and Hagley Road market after the same council policy change led to a Stourbridge street market closing down.

Halesowen's market is run fortnightly in the town centre on the second and fourth Saturday of each month with fresh farm produce and craft items among the items sold. The market is run by Bescot Promotions.

Councillor Michael Evans, chairman of Dudley Council's licensing committee, which decided the pricing policy, said all markets in the borough have seen the same rent increase.

Multiple

He said it would mainly apply to companies as they buy multiple stalls rather than single ones that tend to be run by individual traders. But this would likely force knock-on price rises for traders.

Councillor Evans said: "Operators would have to put up rents to recuperate costs. We will certainly listen to any objections."

"What used to happen was somebody could buy a licence and then bring in other stalls into the equation so they get

Report by Jamie Brassington

five or six stalls for a cheaper amount. This was one of the reasons why the committee looked at the situation and chose to balance it out. This now means everyone is paying the same amount. I believe talks are taking place between the market and Dudley Council over this. We well always listen to traders but at the same time we have to be fair."

Market stalls rents in Dudley are still cheaper compared with neighbouring Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham, he added.

But Halesowen North's Councillor Stuart Henley warned: "If the rent prices go up too much, it could push some of those businesses out." Fellow ward councillor Hilary Bills said: "I think this is unfortunate at a time when we are encouraging people to shop in town centres."

Bescot Promotions declined to comment.

Speed gun team need volunteers



Road safety campaigners councillors Karen Shakespeare, Stuart Henley and Hilary Bills

ROAD safety campaigners are calling on volunteers to help them tackle speeding motorists in Halesowen. They will be out on the streets aiming to catch drivers who exceed the limit by using a speed gun bought thanks to funding from the police.

They will pass on the licence plates of offending

motorists to officers as part of campaign to improve road safety. Councillor Stuart Henley, one of the campaigners from the Shell Corner Partnership, said: "The police haven't got the resources for officers to be on streets catching motorists. People want to help."

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Vigil to remember young mother



Vikki Jones - tributes

THE family of a Dudley woman killed in a car crash near her home have spoken of their devastation at losing a 'special, caring person and a fantastic mother'.

Vikki Jones, 30, was driving in Wood Road, Lower Gornal, just after 10pm on September 22 when her car was involved in a collision with a white BMW. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

A heartfelt tribute issued by Ms Jones' family reads: "On September 22, we lost her. We lost the most beautiful, caring, loving, funny, kind hearted person you could ever wish to meet.

She was a beautiful, strong, caring and loving person who had a massive heart and a love for life. She lived for her family, especially her daughter. She was a fantastic mother, and a brilliant role model."

Thanks were also offered to the residents of Wood Road and the Children's Ward at Russells Hall Hospital, who looked after Ms Jones' daughter following the crash. A candlelit vigil will be held at the scene on Friday evening at 9.45pm. There will be readings before a two-minute silence at 10pm.

A 21-year-old man arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving was released on police bail last week.

The fatal accident sparked anger from residents who claim their calls for traffic calming measures have been ignored.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "Our thoughts are with the family. The circumstances of the accident are currently being investigated by police, however, as with all serious traffic incidents we will be carrying out our own investigation."

Borough lollipop staff numbers down by third

THE number of lollipop men and women in Dudley borough has fallen by nearly a third.

Figures released under Freedom of Information shows there are 77 people employed in the crossing warden roles in Dudley this year - down from 111 in 2012.

They also show that the number of school crossings that are patrolled in the borough has plummeted from 125 in 2012 to 80 this year.

Despite this, spending on staff wages has barely changed. In 2012, 280,581 was spent on wages and overtime compared to £244,123 in 2016.

The downward trend in Dudley is mirrored by authorities across the Midlands.

The figures were unearthed by the Liberal Democrats as part of its campaign to maintain safety on roads outside schools.

Lib Dem Black Country campaigner Paul Butters said: "Four children are seriously hurt or killed while walking in the UK every day.

Vital

"School crossing are a vital service, highly valued by communities, ensuring children can cross roads near their schools safely.

"While councils have faced significant financial challenges in recent years, the safety of children should not be put at risk."

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services at Dudley Council, said: "We actively work to recruit school crossing patrols however it does prove difficult to fill all the vacancies.

"High numbers of vacancies does also increase the costs of the service because of the need to bring in mobile patrols to cover key sites, but we will continue to do everything we can to fill any outstanding gaps."

Last year the council faced protests over proposals to cut nearly £400,000 from the service but the plans were later ditched.

Retired headteacher starts youth club



Ex-headteacher Sue Powis with father Stanley Powis, Baggie Bird, youngsters Emily Crowther and Danny Totney

A FORMER headteacher has set up a youth club for youngsters following her retirement - and named it after her father. Sue Powis, aged 62, has named the club in Rowley Regis Stanley's.

Miss Powis, retired from her post at Springfield Primary in July after ten years as head. She wanted to

provide a centre for young people in the community. Some 26 youngsters, aged 10-to-12 attended the first night at the new club.

Miss Powis, who spent 41 years as a teacher said: "I've recognised for a long time there was nothing for the children from the community to do.

"This will provide somewhere for the children to go at night and bridge the gap for me after retiring. My dad is 93 and we've named it after him. He came down to the opening and had a great time."

The club is held every Tuesday from 6.30pm for two hours. Call 07933 565144 for further details.

Nursery has outstanding report from inspectors

A NURSERY in Stourbridge has been rated 'outstanding' after receiving a glowing report by inspectors.

Little Hands Day Care was praised by Ofsted for its staff being 'superb role models' - allowing children to 'express their individuality'.

The Hagley Road nursery was rated outstanding in all four categories including personal development, behaviour, welfare and outcomes for children.

The report states: "Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn. They successfully extend children's learning through inspiring planning and high-quality teaching which is worthy of dissemination.

"Staff discover innovative ways to enthuse and motivate children. As a result, all children are extremely eager to learn. Staff are highly responsive to children's needs and help them achieve the best they can."

The nursery has 135 children on its roll and has 18 members of staff.

The report continued: "All children make excellent progress and rapidly develop skills to support their learning and prepare them well for school. Children show higher levels of development than expected, listen attentively and participate well following instructions from staff. They are all very confident."

Duncan film Old Trafford premiere

AROUND 200 people attended the premiere of a short film telling the story of Dudley-born football legend Duncan Edwards at the home of Manchester United, Old Trafford, on Sunday.

The screening of The Boy Who Had it All, made on location in Dudley, was shown to fans. Edwards, 21, was the eighth member of the famous 'Busby Babes' United team to die as a result of the Munich air crash in 1958, which claimed the lives of 23 people.

The 18-minute film looks at the childhood in Dudley of the gifted footballer, who played for Manchester United and England. It was screened on what would have been Edwards' 81st birthday. Black Country filmmaker Marcus Distant, who said: "I have dreamt this could happen one day."

Man is taken to hospital after crash

A TWO-CAR crash in Halesowen saw one man taken to hospital. The accident was at the junction of Halesowen Road and Victoria Avenue at 2.40pm Friday. Occupants were outside the cars when emergency services arrived. One patient was taken to Birmingham City Hospital.

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Man accused of kidnap to appeal over extradition

A BLACK Country man accused of kidnapping a model should be extradited to Italy to face trial with his brother, a judge has ruled.

London-based model Chloe Ayling, aged 20, claims she was snatched, drugged and held hostage for six days by a group calling itself Black Death after being lured to a fake modelling shoot in Milan in July.

Lawyers for Michal Herba, from Tivisdale, suggested the entire case may be a 'sham' invented as a 'publicity stunt' to boost Ms Ayling's career.

But at a hearing at Westminster Magistrates Court, District, Judge Paul Goldspring said that 36-year-old should be extradited to Italy to join his brother, Lukasz Herba, 30, to face allegations they kidnapped the model before demanding a 300,000 Euro (£264,00) in ransom money.

"I have decided you should be surrendered to Italy to face trial for the kidnap," the judge told Polish-born Herba.

Following the judgment, Herba's barrister, George Hepburne Scott, announced he would appeal against the decision, meaning his client will remain in custody in the UK until the result.

Italian police claim the brothers are part of the Black Death group, which they claim sells women as sex slaves on the 'dark web' to buyers in the Middle East.

Murder of stab victim is denied

A 20-year-old man has pleaded not guilty to murdering a father-of-two who died after being stabbed.

Niron Parker-Lee is set to face trial for allegedly killing Mansoor Mahmood in Brierley Hill last October. Parker-Lee, of Blewitt Street, Pensnett, denied the murder charge at Birmingham Crown Court on Monday.

Parker-Lee, who appeared via video link from HMP Brinsford, is accused of stabbing 24-year-old Mr Mahmood in the chest on October 15. Factory worker Mr Mahmood was rushed to hospital after staggering into a take-away restaurant but died a short time later. Parker-Lee was remanded in custody and is due to stand trial from February 5 next year.

Sensible choice

WORDSLEY Amateur Dramatic Society will present a play version of Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility from October 11 to 14 at Kingswinford Methodist Church at 7.30pm. To book tickets call (01384) 353662.

Palmer: I lay there fighting for my life



Ex-Baggies - Carlton Palmer

FORMER Baggies star Carlton Palmer says he has been given a new lease of life following a brush with death after collapsing during a football tournament.

The ex-England international, aged 51, who was born in Rowley Regis, was 20 minutes into a masters football match between England and Germany in Singapore when he collapsed and was rushed to hospital.

He says his hands and legs were numb and through the haze of his garbled thoughts he could make out voices of alarm warning of an imminent cardiac arrest. His heart-rate soared past 200 and

failed to slow down. "I was fighting for my life," said Palmer, recalling the incident last year.

"I could feel the air leaving my body. My heart was pounding like it was trying to get out of my chest and it was getting worse."

Fortunately doctors were able to save Palmer after correcting his heartbeat with high-voltage shocks - although not before it had reached 220 beats per minute.

Heart specialists later found he had been born with a slight abnormality to the veins around his heart which could cause

a flutter and atrial fibrillation, known as an AFib or an irregular heartbeat. He underwent a five-hour operation, involving surgery through both groins to widen arteries near his heart.

The AFib could reoccur but the 51-year-old has been told there is no reason to expect a problem. Now, 10 months after the operation, he is off all medication.

In his soon-to-be-released autobiography, It Is What It Is, Palmer says his brush with death gave him a new-found appreciation of life's fragility. Palmer, who now lives in China, spent five years at Albion.

Cradley Heathens could be facing their last ride

ONE of the famous names in Dudley and Black Country sport could be facing extinction.

Cradley Heathens speedway club could fold after their next two races over problems finding a track to call home.

Bosses says the future looks bleak after the Heathens hit problems with the two clubs whose stadiums they share. Heathens, which compete in the National League, have had no stadium of their own since the old Dudley Wood stadium was closed and the site sold for housing more than 20 years ago. The club returned to racing in 2010 and currently race in Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

But with new owners taking over Brummies and more fixtures for Wolves due to a league shake-up, the future of Heathens is in doubt. Club director Nigel Pearson has hinted that he could be leaving.

Earlier this year hopes were raised that the club could possibly get a new stadium in Oldbury but that fizzled out. This leaves track sharing as the only option if the club continues. In the past the club have held 'home' meetings at tracks as far away as Stoke-on-Trent.

Scuppered

Gary Patchett, who is the club's joint boss, said: "Running at Birmingham isn't much fun for the supporters. We are grateful for the fact that we were able to race there, but it's hard. With the likelihood of new owners at Birmingham, they could be running two teams. It may be that Perry Barr is not an option. With Lakeside looking to return to the Premiership, they may come up with a 10-team league and four more home fixtures for Wolves. That's four more Mondays we can't have. We might be scuppered."

Mr Pearson said recently: "The truth is until we find a track of our own, we are always going to be in a very precarious position, and the fact we've actually lasted eight years so far is an achievement in itself. The next two months will obviously be crucial in our decision making as to what happens with the club next year and at this stage I cannot guarantee my own involvement."

Heathens' fixture at Monmore stadium against Eastbourne on October 16 and the FAST Golden Hammer competition at Wolverhampton a week later could be the club's last.

● Bleak - page 40

Jordanne opens new museum



Mum-to-be and tennis champion Jordanne Whiley from Halesowen at the museum in Tipton Road with Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley Councillor David and Barbara Tyler

THE new Dudley Museum, featuring exhibits ranging from sporting memorabilia to ancient fossils, has been opened by wheelchair tennis star Jordanne Whiley MBE.

The 25-year-old mother-to-be, who has won nine grand-slam

titles, cut the ribbon at the museum in Tipton Road on Saturday. It includes the current Wimbledon double champion's tennis kit and shirts and England caps that were awarded to Dudley football legend Duncan Edwards.

Jordanne said: "I didn't know what the museum was going to be like inside. I had a tour around the place and I didn't know there was so much stuff here. My favourite part is probably the Roman section with the coins."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Socktober starts with charity plea

A BUILDING society branch is on the hunt for unwanted socks as part of a campaign to help homeless people keep warm this winter.

Yorkshire Building Society in Halesowen is launching its month-long Socktober appeal as part of its charity partnership with End Youth Homelessness and to raise awareness of World Homelessness Day on Tuesday.

Donations of new pairs of socks, plus woolly hats, gloves, scarves and toiletries can be made at the Halesowen branch in the Cornbow Centre. Branch manager Josh Watchorn said: "It's shocking that so many people have nowhere safe to call their home."

Cars damaged by thieves at station

SOME 15 cars were damaged in a crime spree at Rowley Regis train station car park last week.

Car windows were damaged by thieves overnight between last Tuesday and Wednesday. Police have begun scouring CCTV and are also appealing for witnesses following the incidents.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said: "An investigation has been launched after a number of reports cars were broken into on Rowley Regis train station car park." Sergeant Giles Dean urged people not to leave valuables on show.

Bear necessities in hospital auction

THE decorated bears from this summer's Big Sleuth art trail in Birmingham and the Black Country are being sold at auction.

Fieldings Auctioneers in Stourbridge is hosting the sale next Thursday, October 12. It will raise funds for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

The project's owl-themed predecessor The Big Hoot, raised more than £500,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital in 2015 and The Big Sleuth is aiming to beat that.

Bidding for each bear is expected to start in the region of £6,000.

Illustrated free talk on Victorian schooldays

PUPILS from Cradley Church of England School recently celebrated the building of their infants' school building in 1897.

Linked to this anniversary, Margaret Bradley is giving an illustrated talk on 'What life was like for children living in Cradley 120 years ago.' It will include pictures from Cradley's past.

The free talk is at Overend Methodist Mission, Banners Lane, on Thursday, October 19, at 7.30pm.

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Violent and sexual offences on the rise across borough

VIOLENT and sexual offences has risen by more than 15 per cent across Dudley borough over the last year.

There were 246 more offences with 1,716 violent and sexual offences committed between July 2016 and June this year compared with 1,470 offences between in July 2015 and June 16 last year.

Council chiefs have called for action in response to the 'concerning' trend. Councillor Rachel Harris said: "It's concerning this trend is rising, particularly at a time when we seem to have less of a presence on a day-to-day basis."

Show looks at life of 'Forces Sweetheart'

A NEW show about the life of 'the Forces Sweetheart' Dame Vera Lynn is coming to Brierley Hill Civic Hall later this month for a matinee show.

Lorrie Brown, who has been performing a Vera Lynn tribute show for more than 25 years, embarked on a UK tour to mark the star's 100th birthday this year.

Sincerely Yours. The Vera Lynn Story will be at the Brierley Hill venue on October 24 at 2.30pm. The show will explore her life before and during the Second World War and will feature her hits, including White Cliffs of Dover and We'll Meet Again.

In 2013, Lorrie was named by the Agents' Association as the UK's best Vera Lynn tribute act.

Tickets are £15 available on (01384) 573381. See www.veralynntribute.co.uk website.

"Given the rise in reported violent crimes, I am concerned people may not be reporting other types of crime at a time when they really should be reporting any incident of anti-social behaviour. If we're not going to have a clear picture then we should put pressure on to try and change the way it's being policed."

Worrying

Dudley borough has seen on average five violent and sexual offences a day since July 2016. In June this year 179 such offences were committed comparing to 113 in January.

Overall crime rates in the borough have seen an increase over the past year with May 2017 seeing the highest amount of crimes at 789.

Police and crime commissioner David Jamieson said: "The rise in violent and sexual offences is deeply worrying. To tackle this I am cutting down on bureaucracy to make sure that officers are able to spend their time tackling crime rather than filling in forms."

"By driving efficiencies I have been able to re-start the recruitment of officers and PCSOs. My worry is that continued Government cuts and their un-funded approach to police pay could limit that recruitment."

Insurance entrepreneur bounces back



James Batham has launched Spire Landlord Solutions in Halesowen

A BLACK Country entrepreneur is bouncing back from redundancy with a new insurance solution for landlords, letting agents and housing associations.

James Batham turned down the chance to relocate with a major home services company to focus on launching Spire Landlord Solutions, a specialist in delivering a more flexible approach to 24/7 emergency repair cover for clients with multiple properties.

It has proved a wise decision for the 31-year-old so far, with four new contracts already sealed in the first six months, including 500 properties in Leeds, Tunbridge Wells and London.

The former Thorns High School pupil is now working on a number of potential opportunities in his home territory of the Black Country, as landlords, letting agents and housing associations look to embrace the more personal touch.

"I'd gained a lot of experience in this field during my previous employment and had seen areas where the client wasn't getting the level of service they wanted. There was definitely an opportunity," explained James.

Spire, based at Trinity Point in Halesowen, has joined forces with Johnston Park McAndrew to offer this specific insurance product. This tie-up gives James and his team access to experience, a call centre to answer tenant queries and a 2,000-strong network of approved engineers.

Health chiefs in move to recruit nurses

HEALTH bosses are heading to London in a bid to recruit nurses at a job fair. Workers from Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust will meet potential candidates from across the country and hope to hand out job offers on the day.

This follows a successful summer of recruiting, with 100 conditional job offers given out at a number of events.

The organisation, which runs City, Sandwell and Rowley Regis Hospitals, as well as Leasowes Intermediate Care Centre, is currently looking to recruit qualified nurses.

It comes as hospital trusts across the region struggle to fill nursing posts because of a national shortage of skilled workers. The trust hopes to attract nurses to move from London to the West Midlands, where housing and the cost of living is cheaper than the capital.

Paul Hooton, deputy chief nurse, said: "We have won awards for our staff engagement and cutting-edge research and we are looking to attract the best nurses currently working in the UK."

"They can learn about the valuable training opportunities that we offer and the excellent staff benefits that are available. We know that Birmingham and the Black Country are great places to live and work."

● Russell's Hall Hospital – page 12

Woman motorist is hurt in lamppost crash

A WOMAN received minor injuries after her car crashed into a lamppost in Halesowen.

The incident happened just after 10pm in Spies Lane on Monday. A West Midlands Fire Service crew from Oldbury attended. West Midlands Ambulance Service confirmed the woman in her 20s suffered minor injuries to her hip and ankles.

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UKIP's new party leader gets support

DUDLEY politician Bill Etheridge says he is sticking with UKIP as he declared his support for the party's new leader.

The West Midlands Euro MP and councillor from Sedgley has vowed to back victorious Henry Bolton 'to the hilt' after the former policeman and army officer won last week's leadership election with 30 per cent of the vote. He became the party's fourth leader in 12 months.

Mr Bolton had been considered an outsider to replace Paul Nuttall in the UKIP hot seat. But he comfortably saw off the challenge of anti-Islam campaigner Anne Marie Waters, who came second with 21.3 per cent of the 12,915 votes cast.

Mr Etheridge was one of a number of UKIP MEPs who had threatened to quit the party if Ms Waters had won.

He said: "I am extremely relieved that Henry Bolton has won. We are now in a position as a party to look to the future in a positive light."

On his future with UKIP, he added: "I'm going nowhere. I will be backing Henry to the hilt."

Dudley UKIP councillor Paul Brothwood added: "I am extremely pleased that the membership have rejected Anne Marie Waters and Peter Whittle, who were intent on taking the party in a very unpleasant direction."

Dutch psychedelic blues rock band at pub

DUTCH psychedelic blues/rock trio My Baby have a gig at The Actress & Bishop in Birmingham tomorrow (Friday).

The Amsterdam outfit will be featuring tracks from their Prehistoric Rhythm album at the Ludgate Hill venue. They recently released new single Sunflower Sutra.

Talks with council to bring down costs of installing shell

The Vamps count down to Christmas



The Vamps will launch the festive season at Merry Hill shopping centre with a special concert

BOYBAND The Vamps will kick-start the countdown to Christmas at Merry Hill.

It has been announced that the group will take to the stage at an exclusive gig at the shopping centre on Saturday November 18.

The boys, whose hits include Can

We Dance and Last Night, will be supported by X Factor star Fleur East.

A total of 400 ticket-holders will get to see The Vamps, including Bradley Simpson, from Sutton Coldfield, at the centre in Brierley Hill from 8pm.

Anyone who buys £50 worth of intu Gift Cards at the centre from this

Monday will be entered into a prize draw to win one of 200 pairs of tickets, with winners drawn throughout this month.

Tickets will also be awarded to young heroes in the local area who deserve recognition for selfless acts, such as charity and community work.

A CAMPAIGN to bring a decorated artillery shell to a Halesowen neighbourhood as a war memorial and replacement landmark has been put on hold while organisers talk over costs with Dudley Council.

Plans have been in the pipeline for more 18 months to bring an artillery shell back to Shell Corner, after one stood there after the First World War, giving the area its name.

Halesowen North's Councillor Stuart Henley, who is leading the campaign, said the council wants up to £12,000 to remove signage required for the shell to be installed. He says that's too costly and is asking for a reduction in price.

Students from Halesowen College are currently painting artwork onto the metal object which features poppies and silhouettes of First World War soldiers.

Councillor Henley also wants to install a planter alongside the shell but is now looking at a brick-built one after originally wanting it to be metal.

He has launched a fundraising campaign to finance the project and has so far raised £500, but is asking for more donations.

Councillor Henley said: "I am in talks with the council over cost but hopefully I can get the price down."

An artillery shell once stood in Shell Corner between 1924 to 1937 but it disappeared following changes to road layouts.

More than £110 has been donated at an online fundraising page and £1,000 has come from the Halesowen community forum.

Students from Halesowen College's art department are carrying out the work to paint the shell.

The new one, weighing around half a tonne, was donated by a bomb squad in Essex around 18 months ago.

To donate to the project, visit the www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/returnoftheshell site.

Remembrance festival with the Songsters

THE annual Dudley Festival of Remembrance is being held in Dudley Town Hall on November 9, from 7.30pm.

Kingswinford's male voice choir The Gentlemen Songsters and Dudley Council are organising the popular event in aid of The Royal British Legion.

It will feature a service of dedication remembering those lost in conflict, followed by entertainment provided by The Gentlemen Songsters, Sovereign Brass and Lutley Community Voices.

Tickets are £5 and further information is available online at www.gsmvc.org.uk or boroughhalls.co.uk/dudley-festival-of-remembrance.html or call the ticket hotline on 01746 763850.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



Phones OK surely if you are not mobile

DESPITE stiff new penalties, more than 16 million motorists admit to still using their mobile phones while driving, according to shock new figures from the RAC.

Well that's not strictly true. Delving a little deeper, the figure actually includes seven million who only use their phones while their cars are stationary.

The RAC says it is immaterial whether the car is moving or stood still in traffic. But it does make a difference, doesn't it? Because you can't hurt anyone if you are not moving.

And given the authorities' fondness for digging up roads and shutting motorways, is it really surprising some will text their work to say traffic is at a standstill?

There is no excuse for using a handheld mobile phone while driving but the law should show a bit of common sense when it comes to people in stationary vehicles. And many will still risk a £200 fine if the alternative is an angry boss wanting to know why they didn't tell them they would be late.

□□□

TWITTER is thinking of doubling the number of characters people can use in their messages. Which means if trials are successful, trolls will have a whole 280 characters to spew their venom. And Donald Trump will be able to rile twice as many megalomaniacs into nuclear war. What's not to like?

□□□

TALKING of internet trolls, new research shows 87 per cent of MPs suffered some sort of abuse in the run-up to the last election. It's tempting to say this is not nearly enough, but some of the stories suggest this goes way beyond the harmless heckling of a vibrant democracy.

Labour's Diane Abbott seems to have suffered most, experiencing racist and sexist abuse nobody should endure.

I've never understood why people get so het up about politics, it's a bit like brawling over which brand of margarine tastes best. But some people can no longer discuss economics or immigration without the sort of tribalism traditionally reserved for Millwall away games.

Perhaps Miss Abbott should have a word with Laura Pidcock, the 29-year-old Corbynite MP who described her political opponents as "the enemy", and said she would never be friends with a Conservative. Hopefully one day she will realise that disagreeing with someone is no reason to hate them. MPs can hardly expect people to be nice to them when they can't be nice to each other.

Pros and cons of life with technology and capitalism



Corbyn's nationalisation plans. Should they include insurance companies?



The Vietnam War, remembered in a 10-part series on BBC4, recommended by Rhodes



Sian Gibson in Car Share, who kept using a grandfather's funeral to get a day off work

Droning on about insurance rip-offs

SCIENTISTS report this has been a bad year for butterflies. Which we all understand means a shortage of butterflies. "A bad year for wasps" has an entirely different meaning.

RESEARCH at Nottingham University suggests the winter-flu jab is more effective if you're in a happy frame of mind when you get it. This may reinforce your belief in the awesome power of the mind over body. On the other hand, you may take the view that a vaccine whose efficacy depends on how happy you feel must be a pretty feeble sort of vaccine.

AS you may be aware, I am no great fan of drones, those irritating mini-aircraft that swoop over our gardens on summery, sunbathing days. But the drone seems to have transformed the long-running war between police and those scumbags of the countryside, hare coursers. With a drone in the air, the cops can detect this sadistic activity, identify the vehicles involved and direct patrol cars to nick them. In a recent incident in Norfolk, a police drone traced four men; they were questioned and their 4x4 vehicle was seized. Coursers aim to terrorise and kill the innocent and beautiful brown hare. How fitting that, from the moment they hear the drone above them, they now know they are the prey, the predator has them in its sights and there is no escape. Poetic justice.

OH, Jeremy Corbyn. What is this eagerness to nationalise gas, water, electricity and the railways when the real scoundrel, the biggest, nastiest example of the unacceptable face of cap-

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



italism, grows fatter by the day? It comprises dozens of companies selling virtually identical products, ripping us off with yearly price hikes way in excess of inflation, treating loyal customers like suckers and luring us on with massive advertising campaigns which we, naturally, pay for. I refer to the British insurance industry. The sooner it is nationalised and run by the people for the people, the better. You can understand the wicked Tories regarding the industry as untouchable but surely Labour has a view?

THE Vietnam War (BBC4) is a masterful 10-part series on a conflict unlike any other. It was so vivid, so violent and so endlessly filmed that it became part of our culture throughout the 1960s. Every evening's news brought more frightful images as we became familiar with places like Da Nang and Khe Sanh. And then, quite suddenly in 1975, it was all over and no-one, least of all the Americans, wanted to talk about it. Vietnam became the let-it-be-forgotten war. In 1992 I was on a press trip to Saigon. For us older hacks it was a city that, thanks to all the TV coverage, we half-knew. See? Here's the US embassy and over there's the presidential palace where NVA tanks smashed down the gates in the closing minutes of the war. But for the younger journalists it was just a holiday destina-

tion, a warm, friendly place with cheap taxis and great food. Re-visiting the war is long overdue, if only because it gives us a sharp lesson in how the best of intentions can lead you to fight the wrong enemy and drop blazing napalm on children in the name of democracy.

I HAVE tiny, lingering doubts about the claim that Britain is in for a series of major storms between now and Christmas. The forecasting companies may well be proved right. However, they are apparently using data from as far back as 1940 to predict what may be coming. Looking for patterns in the weather? Why do I keep thinking of roulette wheels?

IN a world riddled with internet scams, a good grasp of English remains our best defence. This, from yet another fake BT email: "This restriction will be disabled intermediately we confirm upgrade successful." Make a note of this one. Intermediately.

A TEACHER in Kent resigned after being accused of inventing a sick partner in order to get time off work. It makes you wonder how many ailing relatives, invoked for compassionate leave, actually exist. Does anyone check? If I remember rightly, in Peter Kay's comedy Car Share, Kayleigh (Sian Gibson) admits having attended her granddad's funeral three times.

THANKS in no small part to you lot and your contributions, this column has been shortlisted in the 2017 Midland Media Awards. Well done, all.

TALKING POINT



At pains to accept age-old problem

A FEW years ago, as an Express & Star journalist approaching the 40th birthday milestone, I was asked to write a first-person article on the pros and cons of notching up my fifth decade on this planet.

It had the usual comic references to putting on weight, losing hair in some places and gaining it in others, ha, ha, very funny...

Okay, now move on 12 years, and what do we find? Another version of me, admittedly personal circumstances have changed, workplace roles altered, a new wife, and pain, everywhere.

One day, it would be nice, just for one day, I'm not asking much, to be completely devoid of pain!

The deterioration of the physical form as humans cross the half century threshold was not something anyone told me about.

As I sit here in discomfort, I have pain in my neck, back, left forearm, fingers of both hands, left knee, and right heel/lower leg. And that is before I try and stand up and get my weary body into motion to cross the room towards the kettle to make a cup of tea.

I am married to a lady who has a catalogue of symptoms, women do seem to get it much worse. I only have three prescription drugs to take every day, she has a drawer-full!

Shoes make all the difference to getting through the day too. Who on earth was around when I was 30-odd to warn me of such required considerations? If I go for the cool-looking flat American style black hi-top sneakers, I believe they are called - you know, like the ones Will Smith wears in I, Robot - within yards of walking I go through the Charles Darwin-inspired evolution of humans chart, only backwards. Starting off with the upright hominid, ending up with chimpanzee.

I arrive at whatever destination it might be a crumpled mess and no matter what I do, I yearn for a motorised scooter to take me back home again. Perhaps that is why we see so many of them around these days - poor choice of footwear!

It seems that home comforts are needed more and more as we get older. Apart from missing my slippers on a recent holiday, I found it almost impossible to get to sleep at night in a strange bed without my beloved pillow.

I can only assume that the pains that I feel will become more tolerable when I hit the big 6-0, as I will either have so many that only the big pains will be noticeable, or perhaps the Alzheimer's will mean that I am not aware of them at all.

GRAEME ANDREW

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Concentrate on driving not the cyclists

YET again another angry letter from an ill informed driver to fuel the anti-cyclist movement. Why oh why do some people have to make it a 'them & us' battleground.

Doesn't he understand there are a large number of safe road users who are both cyclists and motorists and good road sense should prevail for all.

The author of this rant starts his piece with the story of a woman cyclist who recently lost her life but shows no respect whatsoever at this tragic loss of life by instead mithering on about the choice of clothing colour for his

local cycling group. It's like saying motorists shouldn't be allowed black cars - come on, get real! In any case, in my experience, most club cyclists riding in groups have a variety of brightly coloured garments and ride leaders are always clearly marked. Helmets are also obligatory in most cases and lights in use when required.

The fact most shorts & trousers are black is down to the manufacturers but surely unless you are driving a Westfield or Caterham Super 7 or other equivalent low-slung sports car, you will see the top half of riders as well.

Nowadays there seems to be a growing trend for those who prefer four wheels to vent their fury. Cyclists are regularly cut up, abused, shouted and sworn at and this is not acceptable in what should be a mutually respectful and caring society.

With the utmost of respect can I suggest the Kingswinford shopping driver starts to concentrate more on his safe driving and road positioning than the backsides of cyclists minding their own business enjoying the fresh air!

JUSTIN OSBORNE
Stourbridge

Is the rush to deliver dangerous?

IT seems that recently hardly a week passes without tragic news of a fatal accident somewhere on our motorways and dual-carriageways, often involving commercial vehicles.

I cannot help but wonder if our buy-now get-now internet culture might be a significant factor in such tragic events. It is commonplace for internet sites to promise delivery by a specific time on a specific day. Such practices might easily cause delivery drivers to take risks in order to meet the deadline, especially where bonus payments are involved.

I think it is time to introduce a new traffic offence, that of encouraging or inciting dangerous driving.

Whether it might be teenagers' inciting a friend or relative to drive like a maniac, or a boss behind a desk demanding unreasonable delivery times. They should all face the consequences.

MICHAEL CLIFF
Wall Heath

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Thanks to hospital and ambulance staff

JUST like to say a massive thank you to all at the emergency care department at Russells Hall Hospital. I had to attend there on September 4 owing to an accident at work involving my neck. When I arrived the waiting room was absolutely full with more people turning up by the minute.

The way that the staff dealt with it all is beyond me, but they did. Believe me those guys are brilliant, considering the workload and what they're up against.

I can't remember all their names but Jo in the X-ray department was fantastic, as were everyone else, the receptionists, the doctor I saw, all very professional, caring and helpful. Also what a fantastic job Nat and Natalie and all the rest of the crew do on the BBC series 'Ambulance'.

LEE THOMAS
Pensnett

HS2 - sort out NHS instead

IF Councillor Doug James thinks that the staggering £55 billion (and rising) cost of HS2 is money well spent he must be living in cloud cuckoo land. With the NHS, police and other public services badly needing extra resources, spending money on this ludicrous project is bordering on insanity. Theresa May does nothing about it. It is possible that the Conservative Party hierarchy have decided to keep her in power so she can be blamed when big business tells the Tories that it will not accept a hard-line Brexit.

On the subject on the NHS, I wonder which jobsworth decided that the way to help Russells Hall Hospital with its waiting time problem is to fine them £250,000? You would hope MP Mike Wood, whose life was saved by the excellent care that he received at the hospital, would intervene to sort out this nonsense.

PETER SIMPSON
Dudley

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The cast of youngsters with Mya Wright as Dorothy



Tin Man Arnold Tshibangu



Arnold Tshibangu took on the role of the robotic Tin Man



Youngsters from Wolverhampton and Sandwell in the ensemble



Milan Balaz as the cowardly lion



The five main acts; Tin Man, Toto, Dorothy, Lion and Scarecrow

In the groove for wizard show

POPPING, locking and lots of hip-hopping, this updated version of The Wizard Of Oz – featuring school students from the Black Country – was an absolute delight.

Mentored by professional dance company ZooNation, two dozen pupils from schools in Wolverhampton and Sandwell, took the spotlight over several performances.

REVIEW - Groove On Down The Road, Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome. By Leon Burakowski

Performed to a vigorous and loud R&B soundtrack, featuring Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder and breakbeat remixes from Motown's The Wiz movie, Kate Prince's choreography brilliantly blends old school showbiz hoofing with acrobatic hip-hop style.

The set up is that Dorothy is a classroom dreamer, woken from her reverie by an angry teacher and, after being bullied by classmates, escapes into the fantasy world of Oz.

Here her various fellow pupils reappear in the guise of The Scarecrow (dressed in dungarees), Tin Man (boiler suit), etc.

The teenaged dancers, some looked even younger, did not put a foot wrong and were rewarded with loud cheers and a standing ovation from friends and parents in the audience at the Hippodrome's dance studio.

The main five pulled off astonishing flicks and tricks – and showed

plenty of comic timing – whilst the well-drilled ensemble provided dependable support.

Mya Wright, from Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Academy in Wolverhampton, had apparently boundless energy as the pig-tailed Dorothy.

Zedan Russel was a cheeky super-strutting Toto. Arnold Tshibangu was mecha-amazing as the robotic Tin Man whilst Traileam Richardson drew gasps of admiration

with his tumbling skills and fancy footwork as the Scarecrow. Milan Balaz was loyal to the classic hip-hop moves with his spinning Lion, and showed plenty of acting skills too.

The pupils from St Matthias, Copcice Performing Arts, Our Lady and St Chad's schools in Wolverhampton and the Shirelands Academy in Sandwell were superb.

It was the kind of show that saw people leave the venue with a big smile on their face and a spring in their step... more next year please.

Going crazy for actress Sweeney in stage show

ACTRESS, singer and TV personality Claire Sweeney will take the stage for a national tour of a major production next year.

She will take on the role of Irene in Crazy for You, due to light up Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre from May 8 to 12, 2018.

The 46-year-old will replace Caroline Plack in the West End smash hit, which is a tribute to Broadway musicals. It is directed by Paul Hart and Claire will join Tom Chambers as Bobby and Charlotte Wakefield who plays Polly.

Sweeney is probably best-known for playing the role of Lindsey Corkhill in Brookside. Other television credits include Clocking Off and Merseybeat along with a presenting role on 60 Minute Makeover and a panelist on ITV's Loose Women.

Her West End roles include Roxie Hart in Chicago and Miss Adelaide in Guys and Dolls. She previously played the title role in Educating Rita at London's Menier Chocolate Factory and prior to that, played Paulette in the UK tour of the award-winning Legally Blonde.

She most recently appeared as Baroness Bomburst in the National Tour of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.



Sweeney

Model railway club hosting exhibition

CRADLEY Heath Model Railway Club are to hold their fifth annual model railway exhibition at Cradley Heath Community Centre.

The event on Saturday, October 14, from 10am to 5pm, will involve modellers from across the Midlands with layouts and traders selling model equipment for those looking to get started. Black Country author Ned Williams, who is opening the event, will be displaying his latest model creation 'Canterbury Gate'. Tickets cost £4 for adults and £3 five to 15-year-olds.

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Highlights include; Noel Fitzpatrick Live (presented by The Supervet, Professor Noel Fitzpatrick), Top Cats Competition sponsored by Hill's and GCCF and SuperDogs Live (presented by TV's Michaela Strachan).

There will be kids "Teepee" talks and animal handling sessions, the Secret Rabbit Garden and more than 90 educational talks and live performances.

With theatres in each show zone, visitors will receive top tips and free pet care advice from experts.

The SuperTheatre will also play host to live performances from the canine stars of SuperDogs Live, presented by TV's Michaela Strachan, including an opening performance by Britain's Got Talent Finalists Lucy Heath and Trip

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Hazard. The popular School 4 Dogs arena sponsored by Pets at Home will feature live training demonstrations. For tickets visit www.thenationalpetshow.com website.

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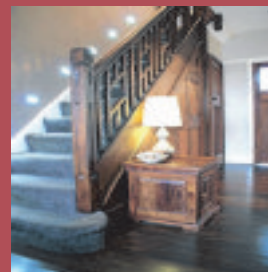
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10 Lighting up for community with woods wander

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, October 5, 2017

A NIGHT-TIME procession is taking place, bringing together all parts of the community at a Black Country beauty spot.

Bearwood Action for Refugees and We are Bearwood are hosting the second annual Procession of Light in Warley Woods on Saturday 14 October, from 6pm.

Following last year's successful and popular event, the community of Bearwood will be coming together once again to spread messages of hope, solidarity, friendship and welcome during the torch-lit walk through the woods.

Meeting at The Fountain at 6pm, the procession will make its way to The Pavilion where it will end.

Representatives from all faiths will be present and speakers from local charity Brushstrokes Sandwell, local Councillor Ann Jaron and Preet Kaur Gill MP will speak on the importance of friendship, welcome and hope within the community.

Tutorial

Brandhall Community Choir will perform a selection of songs and be joined by a choir of children from local schools.

Smethwick Craftivistas are holding workshops, funded by the Near Neighbours programme, with a number of different community groups in the run up to the event. There is also an online tutorial people can use to make their own torch lantern at home to project their very own messages and light pictures into the twilight that can be downloaded from <https://bearwoodaction.wordpress.com/procession-of-light>.

At the culmination of the procession, torch beams, light pictures and messages will join together to create an installation of light.

A free lantern-making workshops run by the Smethwick Craftivistas will take place 4 - 5.30pm in Warley Woods Pavilion prior to the procession for those wanting to make their own torch lantern.

If schools and groups want to discuss how they can get more involved they can e-mail bearwoodactionforrefugees@gmail.com.

Display steeling in the years

MADE in Oldbury is a project exploring unique archive materials in Sandwell in relation to local industrial heritage.

The project is organised by artist group Laundry, working with Sandwell Community and History Archive Service and Oldbury and Langley Local History Societies, and offers an opportunity to explore the personal impact of local industry within living memory.

The initiative has been set up with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This month, the project is staging an exhibition of rare photographs unearthed from the archives of Sandwell and Oldbury and Langley Local History.

They will be shown alongside new artworks from local artists, Jain McKay, Joshua Whitehouse, the Happy Painters Group and students from Q3 Academy Langley, who have undertaken workshops with archive materials.

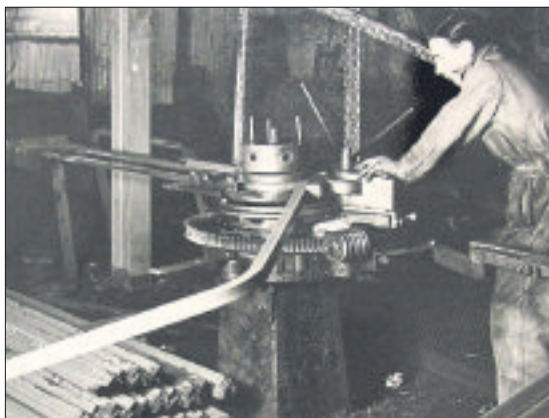
Production

Kate Jackson is also showing a series of behind-the-scenes photographs of work at Metsec on Broadwell Road, one of the oldest sites of metal production in the area, which is still operating today.

The exhibition is on show at the Arts Café, Central Sixth, in West Bromwich's New Square until November 2, on Monday to Friday at 10am - 5pm; and on Saturdays October 7 and 21, 10am - 2pm.

A special preview of the exhibition, which took place on Tuesday, featured the launch of a newspaper by Oldbury Writing Group (who have produced creative writing in response to archive material) as well as a talk by Brendan Clifford, 'What England was to become...' - telling the story of the Romantic painter J.M.W. Turner's Midlands Tour.

The project will finish next month with a new website and photographic catalogue.



A machine worker carries out steel rod angle bending at the site



Workers with some of the machinery at the plant



The London Works in Halesowen Street, Oldbury from 1948



Local artist Jain McKay's typical view of Oldbury and the canal

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Region's 'time to shine' say mayor

WEST Midlands Mayor Andy Street is spreading the 'success story' of the West Midlands at this week's Conservative Party conference in Manchester, declaring: "This is our time to shine."

The Conservative mayor was pushing the region's claims as a model for the rest of the UK and said the time had come for the West Midlands to look beyond the UK and Europe and bring in global investment.

Mr Street said the region had 'outperformed' other areas of the country - including conference host city Manchester - and insisted his focus was on competing on a global stage in the post-Brexit world.

He proclaimed the West Midlands was ready to become a beacon of economic growth, adding: "The message I want to get across at the conference is that this is our time to shine."

"The West Midlands is poised to deliver, not just for its own citizens, but for the country. I want to make it very clear to the Government that we will deliver. They still control some of the investment that we need, so I want the West Midlands to be first and foremost in their minds."

And the region's Commonwealth Games bid was a big chance to further hog the spotlight, he added.

Katherine's comedy night is set to sell out



Katherine Ryan brings her Glitter Room tour to Dudley

CANADIAN comic Katherine Ryan looks set to be performing in front of a full house at Dudley Town Hall next Saturday, October 14. Tickets have been in demand for the TV comedian and presenter's Glitter Room tour.

Katherine recently garnered rave reviews as the presenter and writer of Channel 4's How'd You Get So Rich? and also regularly appears major panel shows from BBC's Q&A, Have I Got News For You and Live at the Apollo and Channel 4's 8 Out of 10 Cats, as well as co-hosting Comedy Central's Your Face Or Mine with Jimmy Carr. She also won series two of Dave's Taskmaster.

Paul Chowdhry has sold out his Live Innit show at Dudley Town Hall on October 12 and TV comedian Matt Forde is bringing his A Show Hastily Rewritten to the stage at Stourbridge Town Hall on October 27. The borough halls comedy line-up also includes prankster Lee Nelson, Cornish comic Jethro and, in 2018, the return of Paul Chowdhry, Doreen in Rise of the Yam-Yam, David Baddiel, Jason Manford and Joe Lycett. For further details see borough-halls.co.uk or call the box office on (01384) 812812.

Praise for college's student ambassadors

A COLLEGE has celebrated the first year of a European funded student exchange programme. The celebration was attended by students at Halesowen College who had completed work placements in Spain, Germany and Italy.

Three sports students worked in Barcelona, and eight students from business and IT travelled to Munich and Trento as part of the Strive programme.

The students were all congratulated by the new principal David Williams, who said: "This project has had a significant impact on the students. They have gained an understanding of working in a different country, which has enhanced their CVs and improved their employability."

Project manager Jamie Morgan-Green, of Halesowen College, said: "This is the first time that we have sent students abroad to take part in work experience and the feedback from the hosts and the companies has been extremely positive. The students were all true ambassadors."

Health crisis looms as funds threatened by missed targets

A CATASTROPHIC winter crisis is looming for social care with £150 million of vital funding under threat, council chiefs have warned.

A letter signed by leaders of Dudley, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Staffordshire councils has been sent to Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt pleading with him to help avert disaster.

The council bosses say 'unachievable targets' have been set for local authorities to try to reduce the delays in people leaving hospital - known as bed-blocking - to just 3.5 per cent.

But each council is set lose millions of pounds each in its Better Care Fund for failing to hit the targets.

The letter says: "NHS England's position is that those local authorities who cannot meet the target will

not have their BCF approved and will therefore not receive the cash transfer from the NHS to protect adult social care. This is funding of around £150 million in the West Midlands on which we depend to fund a range of essential services. Without this funding services cannot be sustained.

"With winter approaching this will have a catastrophic impact on local people, leading to a serious crisis."

Geopark bid gets a showcase display

CAMPAIGNERS hoping to get global recognition for Dudley and the Black Country's geology now have a new exhibition to show its importance.

A themed gallery illustrating the Black Country's geological history has opened as part of the new Dudley Museum, which was unveiled at the weekend as part of the Dudley Archives in Tipton Road.

The Black Country is bidding to become a UNESCO Global Geopark. These are geological areas of international significance which are given protection. A total of 45 geosites will make up the park, spread across the Black Country region. The Black Country is a place where coral seas, swamps, deserts, icy wastelands, mines and furnaces have created a unique landscape.

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Flick knife thug is sent behind bars for eight years

A TEENAGER who stabbed a 19-year-old man at Merry Hill shopping centre has been locked up for eight years.

Ronan Parker was 'looking for trouble' at around 11.15am on July 8 when he barged through a group – two men and two women – walking in the opposite direction at the shopping centre, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 19-year-old defendant turned to stare at them, prompting an angry exchange of words that ended with a challenge to go outside for a fight, explained Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting.

Garden is donated by builders

A CONSTRUCTION firm's plan to donate topsoil turned into a project to help build a complete sensory garden for a special needs school in Oldbury.

The turning point came after a site visit by Patrick and Daniel Lambe from Birmingham-based M Lambe Construction.

The company had been invited to donate topsoil for the ambitious garden scheme but after the visit by Patrick and Daniel, the grandchildren of company founder Mick Lambe, the decision was made to donate all services required to bring the design to life.

The Orchard School is a leading education provider for children aged between two years and 11 years with complex and profound learning difficulties, including severe autism, complex medical conditions, physical and mobility difficulties.

Mason Smith removed his shirt as he and the other man from the group were followed by Parker, whom one of the young women saw remove a knife and hide it behind his back. She tried to warn Mr Smith but he threw a punch before Parker stabbed him once, cutting into the spleen.

The kitchen porter fled to the nearby Marks and Spencer store pursued by Smith but gave the injured man the slip. He pulled up his hood and walked towards the exit but was spotted by an off-duty policeman who followed him outside and the attacker was arrested. A flick knife with a four-inch blade used in the stabbing was discovered.

Mr Smith was rushed to hospital where he underwent emergency surgery and discharged five days afterwards.

Mr Robert Cowley, defending, said Parker had carried a knife 'for protection' since being beaten with a baseball bat by a gang. The lawyer added that the defendant had been provoked.

Parker from Dixons Green Road, Dudley, pleaded guilty to wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and was given eight years detention in a Young Offenders Institution.

Society backs campaign to save house



Hatherton Lodge, which was once home to Noah Hingley, who brought chainmaking to the Black Country

A CAMPAIGN to save the former home of a man credited with bringing chain making to the Black Country has grown.

More than 70 people have written to Dudley Council opposing a planning application to knock down Hatherton Lodge in Cradley. And now the Victorian Society has joined those objecting to the proposal.

The lodge was the home of Noah Hingley. His world renowned Nether-

ton ironworks N Hingley & Sons made the anchor for the Titanic.

In a statement to the council, a spokesman from the society said: "We object to the demolition of this 19th century house – home of the great industrialist Hingley family – and its replacement with new dwellings."

The Victorian Society is a charity promoting awareness of Victorian and Edwardian buildings in England and Wales. It provides a list each year

of endangered buildings and assists councils on making decisions on planning applications.

Cornbow Properties is behind the plans for building. It wants to replace the home in Drews Holloway with two three-storey and five two-storey houses.

Councillor Laura Taylor said: "The property holds historic value and is very much admired and supported by local residents."

Hospital take on more staff after shortage

ALMOST 100 new nurses, midwives and other medical workers have been hired at Russells Hall Hospital to tackle staff shortages.

The trust that runs the hospital has hired 35 members of staff in just one month as a result of three recruitment events.

The events, which took place on August 24, September 8 and September 20, saw nurses, operating department practitioner's and allied health professionals – which can include therapists and radiographers – taken on board.

It comes as 60 nurses and midwives were taken on in addition at the start of August – with 38 nursing graduates, 12 children's nurses and 10 midwives hired.

Dudley Council chiefs have praised the trust for doing a 'sound' job following a disappointing £19,000 trip to the Philippines last year to interview 115 nurses when just three were hired.

Grip

Health and Wellbeing councillor Rachel Harris said: "This is great news for the trust and it's very reassuring for residents and patients that the trust is now managing to get a grip on bringing staff numbers up to the level that we expect."

Staffing levels at the hospital had not been at a safe level last year.

This was due to recruitment struggles, sickness and intense A&E pressure. It sparked an desperate search to fill vacancies, including efforts to hire overseas.

But Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust Interim chief nurse Siobhan Jordan says recruitment was picking up. She said: "We are delighted at the success of our most recent recruitment events and we will continue to host more in the future. "We are exploring many different opportunities to attract people to work in Dudley such as job fairs and other events."

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Black Country queen out to solve eternal dilemma

Review
Doreen's Black Country DVD
By Diane Davies

REGIONAL treasure and self-styled Queen of the Black Country Doreen Tipton is on a mission!

Perhaps surprisingly, the Lazy Cow takes it upon herself to answer the eternal Black Country dilemma – where is the Black Country?

As she points out, no two Black Country folk will ever agree on where or what it is. So in her latest DVD, Doreen sets out on her Grand Tour to reveal her very own Black Country.

Told as only a true Black Country wench can, and with complete irreverence, heart-felt fondness and lashings of Black Country humour, Doreen offers her own unique take on its people, places and history.

Butcher

Black Country characters making it onto the DVD include Colin the chatty 82-year-old underwear salesman at Brierley Hill market, fellow trader 'Bruce the Butcher of Brierley Hill' and dancing 73-year-old 'apprentice' Ken. There is Simon the canal man/Peaky Blinders actor in Dudley, Ade the Wing Chun expert at Priory Park Boxing Club, Walsall town crier Cyril Richardson and even the Express & Star's own archivist Adam Phillips.

Regularly waving the Black Country flag, the Grand Tour takes in The Nether Regions (1), Dud-lay; Walsall, Wul-vrampton and, of course, a homecoming at her beloved Tipton.

The gems of the Black Country to get a 'royal' visit include Dudley Castle and Zoo, Priory Park boxing club where we discover Doreen can pack a punch, The Dog House antiques shop



With a frisky tapir at Dudley Zoo



Doreen's Black Country DVD cover



Doreen interviews Tipton Terror and Wolves legend Steve Bull

in Walsall, Molineux, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Dunstall Park, Mad O'Rourke's Pie Factory and the Express & Star where she gives editor Keith Harrison a grilling.

A highlight for many will be the 'rare interview' with Wolves 'leg-end' Steve Bull who also hails from Tipton and made his acting debut in Doreen – The Movie. Much of the DVD will

resonate with the proud Black Country people. Whether she answers the dilemma or not, her tour does highlight the region's kindred spirit, sense of community and humour.

This is a must-watch for anyone proud of the Black Country, is interested in its heritage, or who simply enjoys a bit of a loff. It is now available at the website www.doreen.tv

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GET SAVING ON ENERGY BILLS IN PREPARATION FOR WINTER WITH DUDLEY'S BIG SWITCH

With autumn soon taking its hold Dudley Borough residents are being encouraged to get saving on their energy bills before winter bites.

Dudley Council is urging people to sign up to its latest Big Switch energy switching scheme. The scheme offers residents market leading deals on energy which are not available elsewhere. Residents who have registered at previous auctions have saved up to £300 on their home energy bills, so it's well worth getting registered.

The Big Switch brings people together to reduce their energy bills by switching their energy suppliers collectively. The more people who register the better the deals on offer, as it is based upon the bulk buying concept.

The deals offered by the Big Switch are not available elsewhere, and it has been recently reported that up to sixty percent of top energy deals are not available on the standard switching sites. To get the best deal it is well worth registering.

In recent month's five of the 'Big six' energy providers have announced price hikes for people on standard variable rate tariffs, with British Gas announcing a 12.5 percent rise in its electricity prices. The majority of people are on standard variable tariffs (sixty-six percent according to Ofgem) and can potentially therefore make significant savings by signing up to switch.

Since the scheme began in June 2013 the collective savings made by borough residents has topped half a million pounds.

The latest Big Switch has launched this week. To take advantage of the cut price rates offered, people are encouraged to call 0300 555 2345 to register, or you can register online at www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch. People will need to have their current tariff details and fuel usage (shown in the most recent bill) to hand.



The scheme is open to all householders, including people living in rented accommodation, those with a prepayment meter and people with a fuel debt of up to £500 or less.

Cllr Les Jones, cabinet member for housing, said:

"Our Big Switch energy auctions have proved extremely popular over the last few years with thousands signing up to take part and saving hundreds of pounds on their home energy bills. The deals offered through the scheme are market leading, so people will be getting real value for money. With winter on its way now is the ideal time to be registering to save, as well as keeping warm and well at home."

To find out more call Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch.



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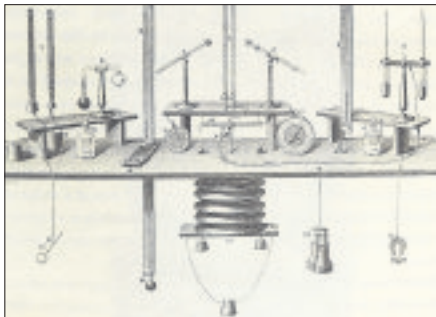
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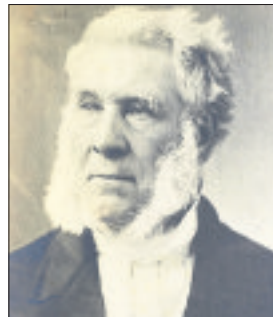




An illustration showing the dramatic incident in the balloon, when Henry Coxwell tried to release gas, after Glaisher passed out five miles up in the air



An illustration of some of Glaisher's monitoring equipment



James Glaisher, who died aged 93



Ali Glaisher with a copy of her explorer ancestor's book

Epic balloon journey by Victorian adventurer was Mammoth effort

IT was a record that was set on September 5, 1862 and remains unbroken to this day.

James Glaisher and Henry Tracey Coxwell set off from Wolverhampton's Stafford Road works in their aptly-named balloon, the Mammoth.

Climbing higher and higher, using the gas from the works, Glaisher diligently recorded the atmospheric variables – from the temperature to the wind speed – before quite suddenly, passing out.

Coxwell, the pilot, managed to release the gas in a frantic attempt to get the balloon lower.

The pair had managed to reach a staggering altitude of 37,000 feet, all without oxygen.

Glaisher was so committed to his work, that once he woke up again from his near-death state, he merely went back to recording the variables again.

In fact, the pair were so typically stiff-upper-lip, that they flew the bal-

MEMORY LANE

Report by Jessica Labhart

loon to Shropshire, landing in a field before walking a mile to the nearest pub for a well-deserved pint.

Glaisher is the great, great, great uncle of Wolverhampton's Ali Glaisher, who lives just a stone's throw away from where the pair set off all those years ago. Ali, aged 65, a wildlife conservationist with Staffordshire County Council, said: "We always knew about James and what he got up to. I think he was very phlegmatic – quite calm and unemotional. His records of the flight show the moment he stopped recording – which is actually the moment he nearly died – and the moment he picked up his pen again to continue writing."

Now, an exhibition about the flight is to be accompanied by performances of creative works inspired by the pioneering mission. Wolverhampton Archives is appealing for people to

get in touch to provide their creative response to the story of Glaisher and Coxwell, be it in the form of poetry, plays or visual art.

Ali said: "I had no idea how important he was to Wolverhampton until I moved here in 1999. That's when I realised that he had the streets by the Science Park named after him, Coxwell and the balloon, and there was a blue plaque commemorating them."

"There's even a beautiful silver-backed clock in Bantock House which has engravings of Nelson's Column and Snowdon and shows how far they both went up in their balloon."

James Glaisher, who was originally from London and worked for the Greenwich Royal Observatory, wanted to find out what happened to the water vapour as it rose into the atmosphere. Ali said: "They chose Wolverhampton as the base as it was in the middle of the country to them, enough inland so that they didn't risk being blown out to sea."

The Mammoth balloon was 55 feet in diameter, and 80 feet high. On

the day, they reached two miles in the air in just under 20 minutes, and the temperature was at freezing point. Almost half an hour later, they had achieved five miles in the air. It was at 29,000 feet that Glaisher passed out. From this mission, the pair realised that, as they went higher there was less moisture in the atmosphere. This discovery alone changed the way the Victorians and indeed we, understand how and where clouds form, and it advanced our understanding of rain.

It has since been deemed one of the greatest missions of Victorian exploration.

James Glaisher died aged 93 in 1903 in Croydon. Now, the performances inspired by the mission will take place in the Rocco room at Wolverhampton City Archives based at Molineux Hotel on November 4. Wolverhampton poet, Emma Purshouse will choose the poetry and playwright Jefny Ashcroft the short drama pieces. To take part and submit work, send a 150-word outline via email to drama@jefny.org.uk by 5pm on October 21.

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Astle family: Doyle's retirement shocking

Pair kick off for England



Kickboxers Arron Walker, left, and Harvey Adlam with coach Neil Kelly

TWO talented kickboxers from Sandwell will represent England at home and abroad next month.

Ten-year-old Harvey Adlam and 24-year-old Arron Walker will be representing their country in two international combat competitions.

They will compete in the International Combat Organisation (ICO) World Cup in Birmingham and then four days later in Italy, at the Unified World Championships in October 2017.

Harvey, who is from Cradley Heath, has been training since he was six.

Last Harvey picked up two silver and a bronze medal at the Unified World Championships plus a bronze medal from the ICO British championships earlier this year.

Arron, from Rowley Regis, as well as being Harvey's coach is competing himself. He's been training since the age of eight.

KEVIN Doyle's retirement from football suggests modern balls are just as dangerous as the old leather ones, according to Jeff Astle's daughter Dawn.

Albion legend Astle was killed at 59 by a disease brought about by heading heavy footballs, and for the past 16 years his family have been campaigning for research into the issue.

And now, former Wolves striker Doyle has retired, aged 34, because heading the ball had become 'problematic' following two concussions in this season alone. He decided to hang up his boots after consulting with medical experts.

"It's shocking, but I'm not surprised," Dawn said. "They keep saying it was the old leather footballs that did the damage and dad used to say when it was wet it was like heading a bag of bricks. It was heavy, but it was slow. It certainly didn't come with the velocity of a modern ball."

"Think about it logically. With the modern day ball, the physics still apply because it's coming quicker."

Dawn says Kevin Doyle has done the right thing, adding: "It's very sad for him first and foremost. Credit to him, he's listened to the advice of specialists and taken what is a big decision."

Albion boss Tony Pulis admitted that Doyle's retirement was concerning – and the Welshman has backed the call for more research.



Kevin Doyle



Jeff Astle

Shock eating disorder figures for children

MORE than 200 children in the Black Country and Staffordshire have been treated for eating disorders in the last three years – with one patient waiting 29 weeks for their first appointment.

New figures show patients as young as eight have been treated for conditions such as anorexia and bulimia across the region.

Figures released under Freedom of Information show a total of 224 children have been referred to the NHS for eating disorders since 2014/15.

There were 168 children and teenagers referred to the Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and 28 each to Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, and South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The average waiting times for patients' first treatment sessions varied from around four to under two weeks.

Lottery

The longest recorded was 29 weeks by a patient treated by the Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – more than 200 days. It led Wolverhampton Liberal Democrat campaigner Rob Quarumby to brand it a 'postcode lottery'. He said: "I think it is a scandal that children are being denied prompt access to vital mental health services simply because of the postcode lottery. It's unforgivable that some patients have to wait more than 200 days."

The Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust did not respond for comment. Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust said: "The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Eating Disorders service has very specific timescales attached to it, an urgent case will be seen within one week of referral and a routine case within four weeks; to date these timescales have not been breached." South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust said the success of their service had been recognised.

Vicious attack on CCTV



A shocking CCTV image of the attack by an iron bar wielding thug

THIS is the moment a man was attacked with metal poles in an attempted car-jacking in Birmingham.

The shocking CCTV coverage shows the 43-year-old being set upon by two masked individuals who hit him over the head in a desperate attempt to steal the keys to

his blue BMW M4. Despite being viciously assaulted, pushed to the floor, and hit over the head the car-owner fought off the crooks, refusing to simply hand over the keys to his prized car.

The vicious attack happened in Tilesford Close, Shirley, Birmingham on Friday September 22.

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16 Grand! Star Gareth jets in for a panto preview

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, October 5, 2017

FROM Shanghai and Kuala Lumpur, where he is touring with the musical Footloose, to Wolverhampton and panto. Life for Gareth Gates just doesn't get any better.

The singer and Pop Idol runner-up was at Dudley Zoo for a publicity shoot ahead of rehearsals for Jack and The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre this Christmas.

He said: "The job has taken me all over the world, which is great, but I'm equally excited to be in Wolverhampton. I love panto. I remember being taken as a kid and longing to be up on the stage."

"Every opening night, I remember that magic I felt as a kid being taken to the panto at the Alhambra Theatre in Bradford, where I'm from, and I carry that feeling on stage with me."

Captured

Appearing with him will be former Emmerdale star Lisa Riley, who captured hearts playing the Slave Of The Ring in last year's panto, Aladdin, and this year plays the Fairy.

Also returning by popular demand are the Black Country's favourite lay-about Doreen Tipton, as Jack's neighbour, but playing herself, and Ian Adams, as Jack's mother, the panto dame – a part that has endeared him to tens of thousands of theatregoers over the years.

The cast – minus Lisa – gathered at the zoo, which is sponsoring the panto again this year, during a brief window of opportunity before Gareth flies out to China and Malaysia for the rest of the Footloose tour. His musical pedigree goes back to being head chorister



Ian Adams – plays Dame Trott



Doreen Tipton – grumpy neighbour



Gareth Gates plays Jack Trott, the hapless hero of the Beanstalk story

for Bradford Cathedral Choir and performing a solo as a 13-year-old for the Queen, to selling five million records around the globe.

He was awarded Best International Male in 2004 by MTV viewers in Asia, China and Taiwan. Four years later he donned sequins and lycra to take part in the ITV hit show Dancing On

Ice, finishing fourth. After that he accepted the lead in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, the first of many musical parts, and during this time also tackled his first panto.

Throughout it all, he has continued to battle with a once-crippling stammer and still uses a voice coach on occasions such as Press interviews.

A queen wronged by man and gods

Dido Queen of Carthage, Swan Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon

DIDO was the mythical founder of Carthage, the north African city that was to become Rome's great rival, and she was a woman wronged by both man and gods.

This seldom staged play by Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare's contemporary, is drawn from classical accounts of the fall of Troy and the foundation of Rome, particularly from Virgil's epic The Aeneid.

Elite

Sandy Grierson is compelling as the conflicted Aeneas, torn between the generous, loving Dido and his god-given mission to create a new city in Italy.

The gods are depicted as a drugged-up elite high on Venus' love blood with Cupid (Ben Goffe) using hypodermics to ensnare humans, such as Dido, as they meddle in mortal affairs.

The minimalist set in Kimberley Sykes' production makes much clever use of a sand-covered stage and waterfall but it is Chipo Chung, as the abandoned, broken-hearted Dido, who sears herself into your memory with her performance.

Dido Queen of Carthage continues at Stratford until October 28.

Formidable actor plays an arrogant war hero



Sope Dirisu as Coriolanus in the RSC's production at Stratford Picture by Helen Maybanks

Coriolanus, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon

ACTOR Sope Dirisu continues as a star in the ascendance with his powerful performance as Coriolanus, a Roman war hero turned reluctant politician with a fatally short fuse.

Dirisu won acclaim on the London stage as the young Muhammad Ali in Last Night In Miami and here he portrays another fighter.

But Caius Martius 'Coriolanus' is a much less sympathetic character. Brave but arrogant and contemptuous of the ordinary Roman people who want to love him. Indeed, he never seems happier than when covered from head to toe in his enemy's blood.

The ruling class want him to be consul but Coriolanus snarls at the hoodie-clad mob when they want him to join the Roman equivalent of today's celebrity carousel. He's a PR person's worst nightmare.

THEATRE REVIEWS

by Leon Burakowski

It's to Dirisu's credit that he makes us care about this bombastic brutal snob in what is probably Shakespeare's shoutiest play. Strong support comes from Hayden Gwynne as his ambitious mother.

Angus Jackson's production makes it clear that them-and-us class politics has been around for a very long time.

Having also last week seen the impressive Chipo Chung as Dido (see review, left) someone ought to bring she and Sope Dirisu together on stage. They would make an awesome Antony & Cleopatra or spellbinding Macbeths.

Coriolanus continues at Stratford until October 14, before moving to London, and can be seen live at selected cinemas on October 11.

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More pets on parade in Chronicle competition



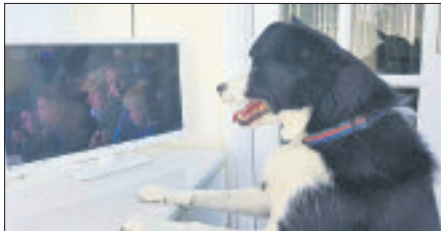
Sugar and Sylvie in a coveted place



Guinea pigs Sherlock and Holmes



West Highland terriers Misty and Meg



Six-year-old border collie Jess enjoys watching tennis



Border terrier Judy, aged 10, has recovered from cancer

Snapshots reveal creature comforts

There is certainly some animal magic going on around here – as your pet pictures show.

Since The Chronicle launched its Animal Crackers photo competition readers have snapped to it and are sending in a host of cute, quirky and arty pictures of their pets.

From doe-eyed dogs, to cute kittens to fluffy guinea pigs, we loved it. And we want more pictures. Send us a picture of your beloved pet and as well as



the chance to see your family pet in print, you could also win a £100 cash prize.

It can be any animal as long as it is

a pet belonging to you or a member of your family.

Our Chronicle judges are simply looking for interesting pictures. We will select 10 of our favourite pictures and then it is up to our readers to decide which picture deserves the cash prize.

To enter email the images to sue.atwater@expressandstar.co.uk and let us have your name and details, including the area you are from and a little bit of information about your pet.

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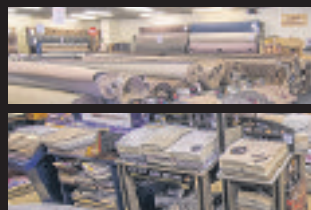
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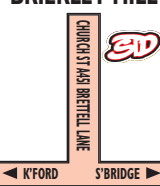
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Gym stars launch world cup at Arena

BRITISH gymnastic stars Kristian Thomas and Ellie Downie have called on sports fans in the Midlands to get behind their country when the Gymnastics World Cup comes to Arena Birmingham next year.

Men's Rio team captain Thomas from Wolverhampton, who trains at Earls Gymnastics club in Halesowen and 18-year-old Downie, who is current European all-around champion, were in the city to launch the event, which will see the long-awaited return of international gymnastics to the West Midlands.

Tickets for the highly anticipated clash between the world's top gymnastics nations on March 20 and 21 went on sale this week, as the UK team began their quest for medals at the World Championships in Montreal.

News of the event coming to Birmingham follows the city's bid to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games, which last week received Government backing. If the bid is

successful, the Arena will host the gymnastics events at the Games.

World Cup Ambassador Thomas, who will be attending as a spectator rather than a competitor, said: "I'm proud to see this event being staged on home soil and in my back-yard. The British team have been enjoying incredible success on the world stage. The next time British gymnasts face some of those international gymnasts will be right here in Birmingham. I know how much people in this area love their sport and they always show great passion when they are supporting Great Britain. I can't wait to see them turn out for the team and get behind their country in Birmingham next March - they're in for a treat."

Nottingham's Downie, who picked up silver and bronze medals at the European Championships in April, added that the gymnasts were looking forward to having a home crowd behind them. Tickets available at www.gymnasticsworldcup.co.uk



Ellie Downie and Kristian Thomas at the launch event in Birmingham for the 2018 Gymnastics World Cup

More than one million illegal cigarettes seized

MORE than one million illegal cigarettes have been taken off Sandwell borough's streets in the last four years, new figures reveal.

The majority was confiscated during the last six months, when 700,000 were seized. The total haul over the last four years was worth £486,000 and led to 13 prosecutions.

Sandwell Council deputy leader, Councillor Syeda Khatun MBE, said: "I welcome these seizures because they are illegal operations."

"In terms of people committing these crimes, illegal cigarettes should be seized and these people should be made to pay for their crimes. Then it will prevent others as well. These are high numbers."

The 700,000 illegal cigarettes seized since March were worth £325,000. This was much higher than previous years.

A total of 154,000 illegal cigarettes worth £77,000 was seized in 2014/15, 130,000 illegal cigarettes worth £66,000 was seized in 2015/16, and 32,000 illegal cigarettes worth £16,000 was seized in 2016/17.

Across the West Midlands as a whole, a total of 5.5 million illegal cigarettes and 645kg of hand rolling tobacco was seized in 2016/17.

Landlord is told to pay out £340,000

A ROGUE landlord has been ordered to pay more than £340,000 after illegally converting several houses in Dudley into bedsits.

Birmingham-based Latif Rehman, who earns £150,000 a year from rents, has been punished after ignoring council notices to undo the work.

A judge described Rehman as 'a significant player' in the industry, who knew that he was breaching planning regulations. Rehman, 58, received £278,000 in tenants' benefits from Dudley Council on three properties in Netherton and one in Wall Heath.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that he continued converting some houses into flats and bedsits even after being told to stop the work as he did not have planning permission.

Ignored

Prosecuting, Mr Mark Jackson said enforcement notices were served on Rehman in relation to two adjoining properties in Cole Street, and one in Northfield Road, in Netherton, and a fourth in Wolverhampton Road, Wall Heath. But in each case he ignored the notice and continued to rent them out.

By Marion Brennan

The two Cole Street houses had each been turned into five flats and the other two both into six. Mr Jackson said: "The local authority has bent over backwards to afford the defendant every opportunity to comply with the enforcement notices."

"He was given extension after extension and used the time to obtain more rent."

Rehman, of Lordswood Road, Harborne, pleaded guilty to four charges of failing to comply with enforcement notices.

He was ordered to pay Dudley Council compensation of £278,028, fined a total of £40,000 and ordered to pay £25,898 prosecution costs.

Row after school bans Sikh bangle

AN EIGHTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD boy has been banned from wearing a Sikh bangle to school as it is considered to be jewellery and against uniform policy.

Kaiden Singh was told by teachers at Summerhill Primary School in Tipton he would not be allowed to wear his Kara, a silver bracelet worn by Sikhs as a symbol of faith.

Kaiden's parents and The Sikh Federation insist the pupil has a legal right to wear the bangle. Headteacher Kerry Rochester said his parents, who she will be meeting, signed an agreement accepting the uniform policy.

The Sikh Federation has warned the school could be in for a legal battle if it does not change its stance, citing a case in Wales in 2008 when a 14-year-old girl won a High Court discrimination claim after being told to remove her Kara.

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IT SEEMS like it was only a few weeks back that we were talking about the delights of al fresco summer tea parties but now, with autumn making its presence felt, I think it's time to think about eating in and staying warm!

Dinner parties with a vintage theme are always nice – and easy to achieve on a budget with a trip to the saleroom.

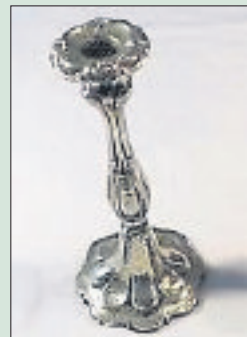
I'm not suggesting you go all out and buy a new dining or kitchen table, although you can pick up some lovely ones in the saleroom for very reasonable prices.

Instead why not make a shopping list of some nice vintage items that will add some old-fashioned charm to dining in?

Let's start with china and from the outset remember that it isn't important to have everything in the same style and colour, mix and match looks great.

Having said that, it is easily possible to pick up a nice and complete vintage dinner service in good condition that will also look really good.

Silver candlesticks make a perfect table centrepiece but for a more informal dinner you might go for flowers in an antique china jug or a candle in a wooden goblet.



Old linen lace-edged tablecloths and matching napkins are again ideal for a more formal occasion, they do require careful laundering but the effort is always worth it.

Cut-glass wineglasses, sherry glasses and tumblers are very popular at present but you might choose a set of plain coloured glasses in red, green

or blue for informal meals.

Meat and cheeses can be served on vintage chargers and dishes, coffee in old cups and saucers and mints and chocolates on pretty little side plates.

Soup and vegetables can be brought straight to the table in china tureens.

- Perry and Phillips hold valuation days, for sale items only, every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.
- The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectables takes place at the Mill Street saleroom in Low Town, Bridgnorth, on Tuesday, December 5. Viewing will be during the weekend and on Monday and also from 10am on auction day.
- New sale bidders are advised to attend the saleroom early on auction day to register and be allocated a bidding number.
- Perry and Phillips hold sales on the first Tuesday of every other month.

French ladies have a style all of their own



Sophistication – Marion Cotillard

I HAVE just returned from a week in France. It was coming to the end of the summer season and there were very few tourists around, the weather was warm but not especially sunny and so it seemed autumn clothing was a necessity requirement.

I find myself looking at the style of the locals, an occupational habit but truly fascinating. A neat white top, tailored navy jacket, jeans and flat brogues in abundance.

The French have a style of their own, it is difficult to define but it is obvious and elegant.

Paris Fashion Week each year showcases the newest of trends, ready for the hordes of "wannabes" sat in the expectant audience, desperate to order and buy the latest styles from the top designers, written about by the editors of magazines and filling the high street shops within weeks but out there on the streets are the beautiful people sporting what suits them with a little "je ne sais quoi". Streetstyle photographers ensuring our magazine pages also depict this timeless and classic appearance.

The style of the Parisian female is well documented, there are many lists to define this

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



individual look and I have sorted through many to find a definition worthy of the style assigned to this chic appearance.

It is important to avoid the trends and find a signature look, investment instead of seasonal, a few particular timeless pieces not a bulging wardrobe, the importance of quality staple items.

Keep your main palette neutral, black, navy, grey, cream and introduce pops of colour in the form of shoes, bags, a dramatic scarf or wrap and never too much jewellery. Avoid bling and metallic in favour of a little black dress or a male inspired tuxedo trouser suit.

The garment fit is crucial and needs to flatter the body, avoiding trends that may accentuate a less flattering area and a good winter coat or trench coat in traditional styling is essential. Ultimately though you should dress

to suit you, wear what makes you feel special and positive.

Consider your make-up, minimal, neat and a natural look for daywear, then maybe a slightly deeper coloured lipstick for evening. Avoid showing too much cleavage or leg, remain feminine and no chipped nail polish or untidy hair.

To appreciate this phenomenon look at the effortless sophistication of Vanessa Paradis, Marion Cotillard, Brigitte Bardot, Catherine Deneuve, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, Sonia Rykiel and Audrey Tatou.

The ultimate however was Coco Chanel who changed the way 20th century women dressed, her look continues to enchant and delight today.

Classic pieces are still very much a part of the Chanel studio. She once said: "Before leaving the house, a lady should look in the mirror and remove one accessory." Less is more!

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Long hours at desks that take a toll on our backs



The longer we sit at desks the weaker our bodies become

LONG hours at a desk are taking a toll on the nation's backs – but you can take steps to offset the damage.

We've all seen the headlines denouncing long hours spent at a desk every day as the root of many modern ills – but how bad can it really be?

"It's a huge problem," says leading physiotherapist and osteopath Tim Allardye. "It is one of the major reasons why back pain is so prevalent, and increasing year on year. Our sedentary lifestyles are a significant contributing factor. The longer we sit at a desk, the weaker and more rounded our bodies become."

"Sitting at a desk for long periods encourages us to adopt a forward postural position, where our backs round and become what is known as 'kyphotic' (a forward rounding of the back). An increased kyphosis in the spine is often a sign of poor posture and is directly related to rounded shoulders."

It's believed back pain affects almost half of the UK population in some way or other, and according to NHS figures, it accounts for more than 30 million lost work days a year. It's not just about back pain either. A recent University of Edinburgh study found many office workers spend more time sitting than the over-75s, and sedentary life-

By Abi Jackson

styles are linked to higher rates of major conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease and type 2 diabetes. But, if quitting the office isn't an option, what can you do about it? Quite a lot actually – although you have to be willing to make some changes...

Ditch al-desco lunches

"New research by Grace Say Aloe shows two out of five people are so glued to their desk, they even eat their lunch there," says pain psychologist Dr Anna Mandeville. "It's a very bad habit that's reinforced by our work culture in combination with high workloads. Moving regularly so we don't 'overdo' one behaviour – for example, sitting – has been shown to reduce pain and improve mood."

Your lunch break's probably your best opportunity to have a decent desk-break and get out to stretch your legs and get blood pumping through those veins – even go for a swim/jog/gym class, if circumstances allow.

Actually talk to your colleagues

Ideally, Allardye says you need to "get up and move every 30 minutes". "Maybe just a two-minute walk to a colleague," he suggests. "Don't spend more than 30 minutes at any one time sitting at your desk." We owe a lot to modern technology – but it's

also made us lazy. So next time you need to ask a colleague a question, rather than adding to their inbox clog, consider getting up and having a quick chat with them instead.

Get a stand-up desk

Research has found that using a stand-up desk can burn an additional 50 calories per hour. Also, when standing, blood doesn't pool in the legs like it can when sitting for long periods, which is good news for health all round. Stand-up desks can also encourage you to move more frequently, which may help keep stiffness and aches at bay.

There's a range of options and price points available and if you already have back or joint pain, it's worth seeing whether your employer could provide a stand-up desk. Some designs – including the Varidesk Pro Plus (from £325, uk.varidesk.com), enable you to alternate between sitting and standing to suit your needs. Available in black or white and three size options (30, 36 and 48 inch), spring-loaded mechanisms and lever-handles on either side are designed to make adjusting the height as easy as possible, and it adjusts to 11 different height settings so you can get it just right.

Stretch it out

There are plenty of simple stretches and yoga moves you can do at or near your desk, to help ward off aches and pains.

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- 2 Thorns Road Surgery
- 3 Quarry Bank Medical Centre
- 4 Clement Road Medical Centre
- 5 Feldon Lane Surgery
- 6 Hawne Lane Surgery (Feldon Lane Branch)
- 7 Crestfield Surgery
- 8 Alexandra Medical Centre
- 9 Lapal Medical Practice
- 10 Meadowbrook Surgery
- 11 Stourside Medical Practice
- 12 Tenlands Road Surgery (Stourside Branch)
- 13 Coombs Road Surgery (Stourside Branch)
- 14 Halesowen Medical Practice

Out of Area

- 15 Cradley Road Surgery (Wychbury Branch)



Your appointment may be with another practice in the Halesowen and Quarry Bank area and may not be at your registered practice.

Thinking Differently



Weedkiller ban could hit elderly gardeners

NEW rules being debated in Europe could make keeping your garden tidy quite literally a massive pain in the neck.

Despite Europe's food and chemical agencies agreeing that it's safe, European politicians are considering whether to allow people to continue using the weed killer glyphosate. The substance is the key ingredient in many weed control products used by gardeners.

The alternative is weeding by hand, which would particularly affect the elderly and less mobile. The aggressive invasive plant Japanese knotweed is very difficult to eradicate without access to products containing glyphosate.

Research shows that many British gardeners over the age of 50 believe this potential EU weedkiller ban would "impact their ability to garden", damaging one of the nation's most popular pastimes for older people.

Sarah Mukherjee, chief executive of the Crop Protection Association, said: "Every independent scientific study into glyphosate has found it is safe for consumers, including the EU's own European Chemicals Agency and European Food Safety Authority.

Banning the use of glyphosate would be contrary to the science and cause particular problems for older gardeners who rely on this safe and effective tool to help them create and maintain a beautiful garden, simply because of political pressure from activists."

Regionally, gardeners in Yorkshire were found to be the most dedicated in England, tending to their gardens the most often and for the longest period of time, while Londoners were revealed as the least dedicated gardeners in England, tending to their gardens less often and for less time. Gardeners in the North West are the most likely to decorate their gardens, with one in three saying they add ornamental features to their garden, compared to just one in five in London, who are more likely to leave things as they are.

Gardeners in the North East were the most concerned about weeds ruining their gardens, with one in five saying weeds are "very problematic" - more than three times the number of gardeners who were this concerned in the West Midlands.

Hit the books while warming up in the house

AS the weather cools down, you can warm up indoors with a crop of new gardening books to inspire you.

You may be pruning, tidying up, clipping hedges or raking leaves as autumn arrives and you start to batten the hatches, but spare some time to look for ideas to help you plan for the coming season.

Growing Perfect Vegetables, Mel Bartholomew Foundation (Cool Springs Press, £11.99)

Dedicated to Mel Bartholomew, the founder of Square Foot Gardening, this book in his honour aims to guide you towards limiting harvests to what you can realistically use and how you can produce more ripe edibles per square foot than you did previously, with less work. Featuring most of the types of veg you're going to grow, easy-to-follow guidelines on how to grow them and great emphasis on how you tell when they're ripe and how to store them.

Plant Love by Alys Fowler (Kyle, £18.99)

Don't let your houseplants wilt and fade away. You have all the advice you need from BBC Gardeners' World presenter Alys Fowler on a plethora of plants from aloes to dragon plants, jasmine, spider plants, cactis and yuccas, whether they need sun or shade, how much watering, how to divide them and increase your stock, how often to repot and what may make them straggly. Use this book and you shouldn't have a withering houseplant in sight.

The Living Jigsaw by Val Bourne (Royal Botanic Gardens, £20)

Insect lovers and wildlife fans should lap up this informative tome from award-winning garden writer Val Bourne, who explains the importance of the balance of nature and how to manage your garden for wildlife. She shows how beneficial insects and predators are interdependent parts of the same food chain.



Amaryllis are a good choice for novice gardeners to grow

Time to grow container bulbs ahead of Christmas

GROWING bulbs in containers to enjoy in the home at Christmas is one of the seasonal traditions that a lot of gardeners really enjoy, but it does take a little bit of planning.

For bulbs to be in flower for Christmas you need to plant them in pots now - and two favourites are the Amaryllis and Paperwhite.

Hippeastrum, commonly known as Amaryllis, have large flowers and are easy to grow which makes them a popular choice for novice gardeners. They are tender plants so are best grown indoors and generally flower within six to ten weeks of being planted. They come in a variety of colours - red, white, pink, salmon and orange - and there are many striped and multicoloured varieties, usually combining shades of pink or red with white. You should grow amaryllis in a pot only slightly bigger than the bulb itself. Use multipurpose compost and plant the bulb so that about a third remains above the compost surface. Water the compost lightly and place in a warm, bright and draught-free position. As the amaryllis bulb starts to grow, keep the compost

moist but don't let it sit in water. It's a good idea to turn the pot regularly which will prevent the flower stem bending towards the light. As soon as the flowers start to open, move your amaryllis plant to a cooler position to prolong its flowering period.

Paperwhites are pretty, sweet-smelling, small flowered daffodils that produce an avalanche of pure white, paper thin flowers. More at home in the Mediterranean region, they have become a fragrant addition to the home in the UK.

To grow Narcissus "PaperWhite" make sure you buy bulbs sold for growing as pot plants indoors. Use any good multi-purpose compost or bulb fibre and plant several bulbs in each pot, packed closely together, with their tips just below the surface of the compost. Water well, but be careful not to over-water. Place in a cool place for about eight weeks, check regularly to see if the soil has dried out, before watering. At the beginning of December bring the pot into a warm position for the best flowering.

Sara Milne - The Potted Garden

Small can be beautiful for evergreen conifers

Report by Hannah Stephenson

CONIFERS used to be seen as dull, boring and way too tall - think Leylandii and you get my drift - but so many new varieties are now on the market that you can add colour, architecture and form to your garden when everything else has entered winter dormancy.

Garden centres are now awash with more compact conifers, as National Conifer Week aims to demonstrate the variety and colours available and what you can do with them.

Derek Spicer, chairman of the British Conifer Society and owner of Kilworth Conifers, said: "We have between 3,500 and 4,000 varieties and we are finding that the dwarf range we do is becoming much more popular. People are putting dwarf conifers with alpines and in rock gardens."

New and colourful varieties are starting to appear, he said. "There are in particular a lot of Phillyrea occidentalis cultivars, which offer golden colour and varying degrees of rates of growth. But they don't suffer much from plant diseases."

You can add colour to the darkest scene with an array of conifers, he said. "There are some superb colours around now, mostly golds, but a few things which turn bronze or a reddish colour."

CREATE COLOURFUL HEDGING

Create hedging out of conifers to provide natural barriers, privacy and a great backdrop to other planting.

"Thuja occidentalis 'Degroot's Spire' will make a very narrow hedge, will grow to a couple of metres in 10 years and is easy to trim. There's a really bright gold form of the Western Red Cedar, Thuja plicata 'Goldy', which is quite vigorous but very amenable to trimming.

"Try Thuja occidentalis 'Smaragd' - it's Dutch for emerald - which is an upright, very narrow conifer with fine green foliage. It's ideal for a suburban hedge, as it has a naturally tight growing habit. We have two or three golden forms of that, including 'Golden Smaragd', 'Golden Anne' and a dwarf called 'Filips Magic Moment', which should only need pruning at the top."

FOR SMALLER GARDENS

Favourites include Picea glauca 'Jalako Gold', Taxus baccata 'Standishii', Chamaecyparis obtusa 'Nana Gracilis', Picea pungens 'Glob-osa' and Chamaecyparis lawsoniana 'Minima Aurea'.

GO POTTY

"Traditionally people have used the old Lawson cypress 'Ellwoodii', but I don't they'd stand in a container for a long time because people don't tend to water them enough," says Derek. "You get to late spring and a dry spell and no one realises things are getting dry. Conifers suffer if they dry



This spectacular display of conifers in a garden makes for a fine display



A closeup of a beautiful juniper tree branch

out. Better choices might be pines and if you went for a slower growing pine you've got an architectural form rather than a bolt upright type."

Regular upright conifers for pots would be underplanted with pansies or other spring-flowering plants, which can then be replaced with summer bedding to extend the season. The conifer can just remain in the pot.

SHAPELY PYRAMIDS AND GLOBES

Beautifully shaped conifers can make stand-alone features on a patio or in the

middle of a lawn or be put with other formal evergreens to create sharp architectural features. Spherical or bun-shaped conifers create punctuation points at the edge of a border or at either side of entrances. They can also provide a great contrasting shape in a border of dainty perennials.

FILL SPACE IN BORDERS

"I would put a number in rather than just one, mainly to give a bit more continuity. Conifers lend themselves to a formal design at the back or dotted around. Alternatively, if you have a formal garden, put an informal



Small conifers can be planted in containers

array of conifers in, in different shapes and sizes."

Cryptomerias (Japanese cedar) should be considered, he suggests. C. 'Elegans' changes colour strongly in the winter (to purple and red), but it is a very vigorous grower. However, you can trim it and hack lumps off it and you won't hurt it. There are slightly more compact versions you can buy including C. 'Elegans Compacta' and 'Elegans Nana', available from specialists.

National Conifer Week will run until Saturday (October 7).



Super stylish – Hotel Felix in Cambridge



Enjoy a relax boat trip on the River Cam



Plush place – striking décor in the restaurant

Taking a punt on a visit to Cambridge

SPECIAL REPORT

Report by Diane Davies

TRAFFIC, trains and towers of grey concrete – all symbols of the soul-crushing daily grind we endure each day in modern suburbia.

Imagine escaping this urban misery to a place where travel usually involves a bike, congestion is an out-of-control tourist in a punt and everywhere you look is an architectural triumph, oozing hundreds of years history.

Could there be such a Utopia of tranquillity? There is indeed – and only a couple of hours drive from the Midlands – Cambridge.

With only the boat race and University Challenge as a point of reference prior to visiting, my preconceptions of Cambridge conjured up images of Hooray Henrys lining the riverbanks quaffing bubbly at pricey bars.

These misconceptions were quickly dispelled as we explored this wonderful city which actually has something for everyone – regardless of age, background or budget.

Whether it be soaking up the sun alongside the river, discovering some of its fascinating history, shopping at a range of top stores or enjoying a varied dining experience – Cambridge has the lot.

Our little retreat was enhanced by our accommodation – at the indulgently relaxing and stunningly stylish Hotel Felix. The hotel enjoys a picturesque spot just over a mile outside Cambridge – a 25-minute pleasant walk. Many people opt to cycle into the city centre of course and there is an abundance of cycle lanes providing safer biking. The hotel can offer discounted bike hire. The hotel is a five-minute drive from the city but beware, some of the town centre car parks charge £25 for stays over five hours.

We quite enjoyed the leisurely stroll along the flat, straight road – when we could tear ourselves away from the hotel that is.

The four-star boutique hotel is formed from a Victorian villa overlooking a garden terrace and spacious, landscaped gardens. It is the perfect setting for al fresco dining or a cold drink watching the sun go down.

It does have a contemporary feel, however, and a unique selling point for this hotel has to be the award-winning Graffiti Restaurant. The vibrant, striking décor in the restaurant is quite hypnotic and the impressive artworks command attention.



Tourist trap – soak up the historical sights on a trip to the city of Cambridge

If the décor wasn't incredible enough – the food is amazing. The hotel boasts of a reputation for serving seasonally-inspired modern British food with an Italian influence.

There are 52 rooms from standard to the lavish junior suites – you have not lived until you have enjoyed a bath with built-in TV!

Cambridge itself is, of course, steeped in history and most famous for the university. If you fancy a tour of the colleges you need only catch the eye of one of the many tour operators waving clipboards around.

But if you choose to see only one it should be King's College and chapel. King Henry VI laid the foundation stone of the college in 1441, founding both this and Eton College.

Demanding the building be without equal in grandeur, he drew up detailed plans but his murder in the Tower of London in 1471 meant the completion of the college fell to subsequent kings, with the magnificent chapel the

product of three periods of construction. The ambitious fan vault ceiling is the largest of its kind in the world and quite breath-taking. Whichever college you visit be warned – grass is sacred, only senior members of the colleges and their guests may walk on the grass.

A charming way to see the universities is by punt down the 'Backs'. During our stay Hotel Felix was offering all guests a free tour with Scudamores Punts, one of the larger companies.

Their tours cover a one-mile section of the River Cam known as the College Backs giving a riverside view of some of Cambridge's finest buildings including King's College, the Bridge of Sighs, and the [Sir Christopher] Wren Library.

Cambridge truly is an escape from the daily grind – so if you are looking for a breath of fresh air I would definitely take a punt on Cambridge.

Pooh's home untouched by impact of tourism

Report by Hannah Stephenson

THERE'S no shortage of British locations which have become well-trodden tourist paths thanks to their celebrated authors – Haworth for the Bronte sisters, Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon, Wordsworth's Lake District.

But just 40 miles from London, Ashdown Forest in East Sussex – where scenes from the film *Goodbye Christopher Robin* were shot and where Winnie-the-Pooh creator AA Milne and his son Christopher Robin had their happiest times – has remained blissfully unmarred by tourism.

ON THE POOH TRAIL

Today, AA Milne's biographer Ann Thwaite, the film's consultant, is helping me retrace the steps that father and son took in the 1920s on their many walks along this 10 square mile stretch of countryside, the little boy carrying his eponymous bear and his innocent pals Piglet, Tigger, Rabbit, Kanga, Roo, Owl and Eeyore.

Yet there's not a sign, a playground, or any hint of a Disney-esque homage to the most famous bear in the world in sight, as we venture into this gloriously untouched ancient forest, much of which is tranquil, open heathland.

Anyone who doesn't know of Ashdown Forest's connection with Winnie-the-Pooh or his creator will be little the wiser once in the "Hundred Aker Wood" which is in reality called the Five Hundred Acre Wood.

A FOREST UNTOUCHED

Ann, a sprightly 84-year-old and expert on all things AA Milne, takes fans on the paths trodden by the most lucrative children's author in the world.

"I always get lost," she confesses. "You see groups of scouts doing orienteering, but there's no little model of Winnie-the-Pooh in every corner guiding them."

"The landscape hasn't changed in all those years," she continues. "You can't even hear any traffic. It's very sandy, too. There's a scene in Winnie-the-Pooh when

Roo is playing in a sandpit, and if you look at the books you can see where Shepard (illustrator EH Shepard) was drawing the actual place."

She leads us to a shady circle of pine trees in Gills Lap (renamed Galleons Lap in the books), in Milne's words an "enchanted place" which is apparently popular with fans, but there's no one here today.

Just out of the trees, there's the most spectacular view from the High Weald of the Downs, a patchwork quilt

of green fields, divided by forest, with hardly a trace of visible civilisation. It's where AA Milne took his son on walks for precious time out and where he later took his illustrator, Ernest Shepard, who recreated Ashdown as the background in the Pooh books.

On the rock where they sat – and where the actors who play them are featured in the film – there's a commemorative plaque to AA Milne and EH Shepard who "captured the magic of Ashdown Forest."

THE FAMOUS POOH BRIDGE

The most visible sign that we are in Pooh territory is a wooden signpost to Pooh Bridge, which features in the film. Here we stand, twigs at the ready, chucking the thin wooden sticks in the river – a tributary of the Medway – before darting to the other side to see whose twig appears first.

Christopher Milne, who died in 1996, did much for the restoration of the bridge, Ann recalls. "He also led the fight to save the forest from development and oil exploration," she said. "He said he took the playground of his Sussex childhood with him wherever he went."

Today, the area is highly protected, Thwaite observes, which is why there is no housing in the forest. The only sign of any building is the odd version of Eeyore's house in the woods, made from twigs and branches by those obviously on a family day out.

"The whole thing is a celebration of outdoor play and imagination," Ann enthuses. "Christopher Robin, the real boy, was very keen on climbing trees. Trees were a very important part of his life and the great outdoors was a great therapy for Milne when the whole of England was trying to recover from the effect of war."



Christmas coming to town in a big way in Zurich



Ice skating at Zurcher Weihnachtsdorf

COULD there be anything more opulent than a Christmas tree covered in 7,000 glittering Swarovski crystal ornaments?

Anywhere else it might seem an ostentatious display, but it's a rather fitting showpiece in Zurich's Hauptbahnhof Christmas market, Christkindlimarkt, in Switzerland's fashionable financial capital, writes Nick McAvaney.

Divine boutiques on every corner sell cutting-edge fashion and designer homewares, while sharply dressed locals stroll through the markets, considering classic wooden toys, sumptuous chocolate

or unique jewellery for Christmas gifts. There's no tacky plastic rubbish here.

Starting my journey at the central station market, it reminds me of the traditional Christmas markets found across Germany, albeit with a Swiss twist.

Avenues of wooden huts surround the crystal Christmas tree, and spiced apple or orange punch is as popular as mulled wine (Gluhwein).

Across the other side of the city, Sechselautenplatz hosts the largest market and is certainly a favourite with children. They skip around me on their way to a skating path, a course running around a small house and along fir tree-lined alleys on the southern edge of the market. Adults clearly enjoy it too.

No Christmas kitsch here either, as the 100-odd stalls across the square have locally sourced designer and artisan goods on sale, alongside a surprisingly multicultural range of cuisine.

Aromas from curries, stir fries, burgers and pasta fill the air as I make a bee-line for the fondue chalet, hoping to tuck into a raclette and beer. But I'm told that due to popular demand, tables need to be reserved days in advance.

Over the river at Werdmühleplatz I make it just in time for a truly unique event, Zurich's singing Christmas tree. A dozen choristers take to a vertical triangle-shaped podium to serenade their audience with festive hits. It's an enchanting end to my evening.



CHANGE OF PACE FOR HAIRSPRAY

PAGE 2

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The kitchen is open Mon-Fri 12-2pm and 5-9pm and Sat 12-9pm serving a range of locally sourced sausages, delicious pies and traditional faggots as well as tasty burgers. A full home cooked Sunday lunch is available between 12-6pm with a choice of 3 meats and heaps of delicious veggies, served with lashings of gravy.

If that's not enough to encourage you to visit, try out our entertainment offering which includes a DJ every Friday and live music every Saturday.

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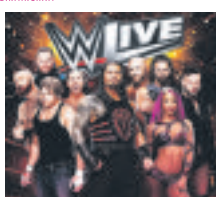
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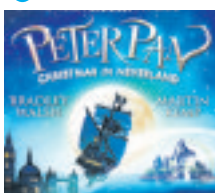
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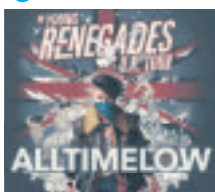
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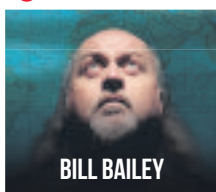
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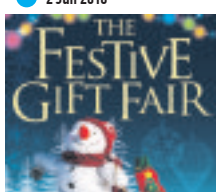
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It's the perfect Pace for a big old Hairspray 'do'

He's sitting in a pub in Lytham St Anne's. Norman Pace is chipper. The actor and comedian who is best known as one half of the comedy duo Hale and Pace has as much work as he would care for and is at peace with the world.

He's presently on the road in Hairspray, the 15-minute blitzkrieg of scintillating fabulousness. The all-singing, all-dancing, all-action musical is set in Baltimore, 1962. It tells the story Tracy Turnblad, a big girl with big hair and an even bigger dream: to dance her way onto national TV, and into the heart of teen idol Link Larkin. Tracy's audition makes her a local star and soon she is using her new-found fame to fight for integration. But can she win equality – and Link's heart – without denting her 'do?

The feel-good musical features the hit songs Welcome To The 60s, You Can't Stop The Beat, The Nicest Kids in Town and many more and has Norman smiling each and every night.

"I have to say that I know Hairspray is a very good show but this really is a tremendous production. Drew McOnie is the go-to choreographer in Broadway and the West End and has worked on this.

"They really pulled out all the stops to get the right people for the show. They went through 1,600 hopefuls before they settled on the 32 people that you see on on stage. It's my first time in it and I'm loving it. A few of the guys have done this before but I'm the new boy, which is funny, since I'm also by far the oldest."

Reaching the tender age of 64 – amid a cast of 20-somethings – is great fun for Norman. Being around the younger generation keeps him young.

"I love being with the kids. Their enthusiasm and joie de vivre is inspiring. I get up at the end of the show and we do You Can't Stop The Beat. I love it. I do it eight times a week. Before I start, I know the audiences will love it and go mad. We've done 40-odd shows and every one has been a standing ovation.

"Seriously, you couldn't wish for a better group. Last night, after the show in Blackpool, one of the guys from the show said he knew a bloke who'd got a pub that did live music. Out of the 55 people on tour, 40 people turned up and we had a great night. The band got up and entertained us. It's brilliant fun."

Norman has to pinch himself when he considers the number of years he's successfully spent in showbusiness. The former teacher has been treading the

Dare to dream – Norman Pace stars in the feel-good musical



boards for 36 years – many of them with his friend and comic partner Gareth Hale. They recently recorded four episodes of ITV's Benidorm, spending 10 weeks in Spain with Shropshire actor John Challis, among others.

And yet for Norman, all roads lead to the Black Country. Though he grew up in Newark-on-Trent, in Nottinghamshire, his heart belongs to Dudley.

"My granny and grandad lived in Dudley. When my mother was pregnant with me at the age of 18, she went to Dudley to have the baby. I think there was some sort of scandal because of the Catholic Church – if it wasn't for the church, I wouldn't be here. They didn't do such things as abortion back then.

So mum tried to pull a fast one and had me in Dudley then I'd visit my granny and grandad on holidays. They lived on Blowers Green Crescent, I still remember it now.

"There were slag heaps that were turned into football pitches and I'd go there until about the age of ten. The family were West Brom fans and took me to the Hawthorns to cheer on the Baggies. They were happy times. I felt very loved when I visited the Black Country."

Fame came calling for Hale and Pace when they worked together on a series of comedy shows, as well as featuring in Dalziel and Pascoe, guest starring in the Doctor Who serial Survival and featuring in a Christmas Special of Extras. "It was a joyride. The whole thing was

thrilling and we didn't have a minute to stop and think about it. If Gareth and I weren't making the TV series, we'd be touring. In every spare moment we'd be writing and we were even stupid enough to go on holiday together as families.

"The only downside about that experience was losing your privacy. At the petrol station, a queue of people would look at you like you were in a goldfish bowl. I'm under the radar these days and there are times when I grow a beard and people don't recognise me. It used to be that you'd get people arguing about which one you were. But it's no big deal. I had my taste of that life and it was intense. I can understand why film stars have people to fill their car up for them. Can you imagine what would happen if Rod Stewart was on the forecourt at Morrisons?"

Norman has no plans to slow down. There's no exit strategy, no secret yearning for a quieter life, no intention of upping sticks and moving to somewhere quieter.

"The laughter is what keeps you coming back. Even now, after all these years, if you're good at it and have a lot of experience and have enjoyed a long career, you can still learn a lot of things about how to do it better. I always want to beat the laughter I got last night, I want to keep moving forward."

He loves the fact that he's been able to play both TV and theatre during a starry career. He's worked with tremendous actors down the decades and their skills have helped him to develop.

For now, all thoughts are of Hairspray. "It's great bringing the show to Birmingham because Dudley's only just down the road and that's always been special to me. I'm hoping that people from Dudley and Wolves will pop over and say hello."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

Kara Lily Hayworth as Cilla Black



Step inside for musical story of singing star Cilla

LEADING lady in Cilla The Musical, Kara Lily Hayworth, beat thousands of hopefuls to be named as the girl to step into the Liverpool legend's shoes in the first musical about the star's life, at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre next week.

Cilla The Musical, which began its tour in Liverpool last month, is an adaptation of the critically acclaimed ITV mini-series based on the early life of Cilla Black, by BAFTA award-winner, Jeff Pope.

Kara queued for four hours at London's Dominion Theatre to have her chance to audition in the first rounds. She made it to a final audition at the Cavern Club in Liverpool. Executive producer Robert Willis, who is Cilla's son, said: "We wanted somebody who wasn't going to impersonate my mum but someone

who could capture her spirit. Kara came in with her huge personality and amazing voice. When I saw the response of the audience at the Cavern, I knew we'd found her!"

From Watford, Kara trained at the Central School of Speech and Drama, and this will be her first leading role in a big musical. She even briefly met the 1960s pop star turned TV presenter, when the 11-year-old Kara got the Surprise Surprise host's autograph.

"She was a huge inspiration to me as a child," says Kara. "I grew up watching her on Blind Date every Saturday night with my Nan. To play her is such an honour."

The show is packed with 60s songs including Cilla's own hits, such as Anyone Who Had a Heart and Alfie.

Gangsters, no, kids' TV did it for Coolio

He's a Grammy-award winning rapper, best known for his mega hit Gangsta's Paradise.

But 54-year-old Coolio has come a long way since the mid 90s. He's now a chef and activist for the environment and raising awareness of asthma, a TV and film star.

The Compton-born star (that's LA not Wolverhampton) will come to Arena Birmingham with I Love The 90s on Saturday which Coolio says is the greatest tour of his career. Joining him will be fellow 90s stars Vanilla Ice, Salt N Peppa, Color Me Badd, Tone Loc and Young MC.

"This tour is really great. Everybody knows each other, and have done for so many years; it's like going on tour with your family," he said.

"It's an amazing show. This is one of the best tours of my career. There's just non-stop involvement and dancing.

"I've always had a good time in the UK. I can't think of a bad time I've had there. At the beginning of my career, there may have been a few mishaps. But people have always treated me well there and I've done shows pretty much everywhere in the UK."

Coolio has not only made his

name as a rap artist, but also as a writer of theme songs, having rapped the theme tune to children's TV show Kenan and Kel, which also opened up the world of acting to the Californian. Since then, he's had parts in Adult Swim TV show Black Jesus and Daredevil, as well as taking part in UK reality show Celebrity Big Brother and game show Tipping Point.

"Kenan and Kel, believe it or not, has turned out to be the one of the most important things I've done in my career. Just as much as Gangsta's Paradise," added Coolio.



Greg puts Brum to task in festival

A host of comic talent is gathering for Birmingham Comedy Festival at various venues. Highlights include Taskmaster's Greg Davies, right, at Symphony Hall Monday and Tuesday. Brum's Joe Lycett joins Yardley MP Jess Phillips at the Town Hall on Wednesday. Henning Wehn proves Germans have a sense of humour at the Town Hall next Friday and Saturday. Other acts include Matt Lucas, Simon Amstell, Phill Jupitus and Zoe Lyons. See www.bhamcomfest.co.uk



Powerhouse trio Yak back for home city gig

FEROCIOUS London-based rock trio Yak, fronted by Wolverhampton's Oli Burslem, have a rare gig in his home city at Newhampton Arts Centre on Thursday, October 12. Gigs at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms include rockers Arcane Roots tomorrow (Friday), blues singer Rebecca Downes on Saturday, acclaimed guitarist Andy McKee on Sunday, Nottingham's Amber Run play Tuesday and Broken Witt Rebels next Friday.

US country star Marty Stuart is at Birmingham Town Hall tomorrow, Wolverhampton's Beverley Knight brings soul to Symphony Hall on Sunday. Country-pop outfit Lady Antebellum play Birmingham Arena on Monday, the same night Nick Mulvey is at O2 Institute in Digbeth. Dweezil Zappa celebrates father Frank's legacy at Birmingham Town Hall on Thursday.

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CHOICE



Ross Sutherland

Basquiat - Rage to Riches (BBC2, 9pm)
Documentary, exploring the rise in profile of the output of American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose work is currently the subject of a large-scale exhibition at the Barbican in London - the first time a wholly Basquiat collection has been displayed in the UK. This film serves as a portrait of Jean-Michel's origins, making use of interviews with his sisters Lisane and Jeanine, along with accounts from his friends, confidants, lovers and contemporaries, to detail how a self-taught, Brooklyn-born artist came to rank alongside the likes of Picasso, de Kooning and Francis Bacon on the international art marketplace - 29 years after his death.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** The Hairys Bikers' Comfort Food. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **12.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Gymnastics: World Championships. **2.45** Film: Muppets Most Wanted. (2014) Comedy, starring Ricky Gervais. **4.25** Chris Coleman: Dare to Dream. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Pointless Celebrities. **6.35** **Strictly Come Dancing**. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present as the pro-celebrity dance competition continues. Last week, the couples were given their first taste of the pressures of avoiding elimination, and the tension does not let up as the second round of the competition proper gets under way with Movie Week. As in previous competitions, the 14 duos are challenged to come up with routines that pay homage to Hollywood's greatest films, and they begin with a group performance that serves as a tribute to recent smash-hit musical La La Land. As always, Shirley Ballas, Craig Revel Horwood, Bruno Tonioli and Darcey Bussell are on hand to deliver their verdict on the stars' performances, before handing over judging duties to viewers at home, who will get a chance to have their say over which performers to back ahead of the results show. **8.40** **Casualty**. Dylan is forced to bring Santos into the Emergency Department, much to David's dismay, and Lily grows ever more jealous of the bond forming between Iain and Sam. Meanwhile, Connie struggles to deal with the severity of her diagnosis, and tries to come to terms with what it means for her future. **9.30** **Mrs Brown's Boys**. Agnes and the Brown family await the fruits of their fraud after faking Grandad's death to get a payout, but the insurance company starts to grow suspicious. (R) **10.00** **BBC News**: Weather; National Lottery Update. **10.20** **Film: Thor: The Dark World**. (2013) The thunder god joins forces with his treacherous brother to defend the universe against an old foe. Superhero adventure sequel, with Chris Hemsworth. **12.05** The NFL Show. **12.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.40** BBC News.

BBC2

7.10 **Film**: Hans Christian Andersen. (1952) **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up! **11.00** Natural World. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends. (R) **1.00** Railways of the Great War with Michael Portillo. (R) **1.30** Flog It! (R) **2.30** Grand Tours of the Scottish Islands. (R) **3.30** India: Nature's Wonderland. (R) **4.30** Mastermind. (R) **5.00** The Big Family Cooking Showdown. (R) **6.00** **Anglesey: Island Life**. New series. The lives of some of the residents of Wales' largest island, including Mike Williams, who is trying to get his smoke-damaged shop back on its feet. **6.30** **Gardeners' World**. Monty Don gives advice on making leaf mould from fallen leaves and how to use it. Frances Tophill helps a gardener whose plants are not thriving where they are planted. (R) **7.30** **Front Row**. Harrison Ford and Ryan Gosling discuss Blade Runner 2049. Ian McKellen offers a masterclass in playing Shakespeare's King Lear, and Tim Minchin performs live in the studio. **8.00** **Britain Afloat**. Mary-Ann Ochota tells the story of river boats in Britain, reaching back through time to investigate the ancient coracle, which is thought to have been in use for 40,000 years. **8.30** **Dad's Army**. Warden Hodges challenges Captain Mainwaring's platoon to a cricket match. Featuring a guest appearance by former England and Yorkshire fast bowler Fred Trueman. (R) **9.00** **Basquiat - Rage to Riches**. Documentary, profiling the rise in profile of the work of American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, via interviews with his sisters, friends, confidants, lovers and contemporaries. **10.30** **Performance Live: Missing Episode**. Ross Sutherland's audio-visual poem, which remixes an edition of EastEnders from October 7, 1997 to tell the story of what happened to the poet the night that episode first aired. **11.00** **Later - with Jools Holland**. The pianist welcomes the National back to the show, along with Morrissey, Queens of the Stone Age, Khalid, Jessie Ware and Marty Stuart. **12.05** **Film**: Bright Days Ahead. (2013) **1.35** **Film**: A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square. (1979)

ITV

6.00 CITY: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission: Emploable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.20** Midsomer Murders. (R) **1.10** ITV News: Weather. **1.15** Catchphrase. (R) **2.00** The Chase. (R) **2.55** The X Factor: Bootcamp. (R) **4.25** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **4.50** Little Big Shots. (R) **5.50** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.00** **ITV News**: Weather. **6.15** **Cannonball**. Andrew Flintoff hosts the action-packed game show, in which contestants tackle a series of water-based, obstacle course challenges in the hope of claiming the Cannonball Cup. **7.10** **The Family Chase**. Bradley Walsh hosts one final round of the family-themed edition of the game show. This time, the Price clan from Oldham makes a bid to outplay one of the resident professional quizzers. Last in the series. **8.15** **The X Factor: Bootcamp**. **9.45** **The Jonathan Ross Show**. Game of Thrones star Kit Harington joins Jonathan in the studio, and while he will no doubt be talked into chatting about the shocking developments for his character Jon Snow at the end of the show's penultimate series, discussion is likely to fall on the fact that he is starring as Robert Catesby - his own ancestor - opposite fellow guest Liv Tyler in the BBC's historical drama Gunpowder later this autumn. Also taking a seat on the sofa this evening are former Great British Bake Off presenter Sue Perkins, Grammy Award-winning singer Mary J Blige, and comedian Rob Beckett. **10.45** **ITV News**: Weather. **11.05** **Film: American Pie: The Wedding**. (2003) The friends reunite to celebrate Jim and Michelle's forthcoming trip to the altar - but events quickly spiral out of control. Comedy sequel, with Jason Biggs and Alyson Hannigan. **12.50** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Mobil 1 The Grid. **6.45** Triathlon: Stoke on Trent City of Sport. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** The Crystal Maze. (R) **1.00** Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights. **2.30** World's Most Expensive Cars. **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.35** Location, Location, Location. (R) **6.30** **Channel 4 News**. **7.00** **Britain's Ancient Tracks with Tony Robinson**. The Time Team veteran continues his journeys down some of the UK's oldest trackways and roads. This time, he visits the Peak District, where he ventures along the Derbyshire Portway, which is believed to date from the Bronze Age, and can be traced from Mam Tor in the north of the county, through to the Hemlock Stone on the edge of Nottingham. Along the way, he examines a prehistoric shark tooth, shines a light in an abandoned railway tunnel and takes a tour of DH Lawrence's mountain retreat. **8.00** **WWII's Great Escapes: The Freedom Trails**. Monty Halls travels along the ridges of the French Pyrenees mountains on the border with Spain, which were traversed by thousands of people seeking to escape Nazi occupation. **9.00** **Film: Escape Plan**. (2013) An expert takes a contract from the CIA to test a maximum security prison by trying to break out of it, but he soon discovers he has been duped and that his captors intend him to stay inside for ever. He hatches a plan to escape, but to succeed he will need the help of a long-term convict - who wants his own freedom in return for assistance. Thriller, with Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger. **11.15** **Film: The Gunman**. (2015) After spending years in hiding, a mercenary becomes the latest target of his former colleagues. Crime drama, starring Sean Penn and Idris Elba. **1.20** The Last Leg. (R) **2.20** Holyoaks. **4.30** Building the Dream. (R) **5.25** Four in a Bed. (R) **5.55** Kevin Can Wait.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.20** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **11.50** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.50** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.50** Nightmare Tenants. Slum Landlords. (R) **2.50** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **3.50** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **4.50** 5 News Weekend. **4.55** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.50** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **6.50** **Film: Where Eagles Dare**. (1968) An American general is held captive by the Nazis in a heavily defended fortress in the Alps. A crack team of British soldiers and an American lieutenant are dispatched to free him, but they soon realise there is a traitor in their ranks. Second World War adventure, starring Richard Burton, Clint Eastwood, Patrick Wymark, Michael Hordern and Mary Ure. **9.45** **Live Boxing: York Hall Brawl**. Andrew Selby v Maximino Flores. Coverage of the WBC world flyweight eliminator, which takes place at York Hall in Bethnal Green. Welshman Selby is undefeated thus far in his fledgling career, having won all nine of his previous bouts, with five of them being by stoppage. **11.30** **Football on 5: Goal Rush**. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Southend United and Barnet v Coventry City. **12.15** SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with an entertaining mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. Featuring a variety of prizes and promotions. **3.10** **Film: Love at the Parade**. (2012) The organiser of Chicago's Thanksgiving parade is furious when a consultant is brought in to take charge of the event's finances, thinking he is only interested in profit. But when she suffers an unexpected crisis, she finds support in her previously unwanted colleague, and begins to fall for him. Romantic drama, with Autumn Reeser and Antonio Cupo. **4.40** Divine Designs. Paul Binski investigates the period after the Second World War, which saw the birth of a modern style of ecclesiastical architecture. He visits Coventry and Chichester cathedrals to highlight the contemporary designs. (R) **5.05** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.30** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 The Incredible Human Journey **8.00** Wild China **9.00** Black Lake **10.25** James May: The Christmas Reassembler **11.55** James May: The Reassembler **11.25** British Sitcom: 80 Years of Laughing at Ourselves **12.25** Top of the Pops: 1984 **1.30** EMI: The Inside Story **2.30** Wild China **3.30** Close
ITV2
11.25 The X Factor: Bootcamp **1.00** **Film: The Lake House** (2006) **2.00** FYI Daily **2.05** **Film: The Lake House** (2006) **3.05** **Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas** (2000) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10** **Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas** (2000) **4.55** **Film: Happy Feet** (2006) **5.55** FYI Daily **6.00** **Film: Happy Feet** (2006) **7.00** **Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug** (2013) **8.05** FYI Daily **8.10** **Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug** (2013) **10.15** **Celebrity Juice** **11.05** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.25** Bromans **2.25** **Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records** **2.30** **Teleshopping** **5.50** **ITV2** **Nightscreen**
ITV3
11.50 Bertie and Elizabeth **1.55** Rosemary & Thyme **2.55** Foyle's War **7.00** **Midsomer Murders** **11.00** **Lewis** **1.05** **On the Buses** **2.00** **ITV3** **Nightscreen** **2.30** **Teleshopping**
ITV4
11.30 British Touring Car Championship Highlights **1.00** **Pawn Stars** **1.30** **ITV** **Racing: Live from Ascot**. Coverage of today's meetings from Ascot, Newmarket and Redcar. **4.00** **World Cup Top Goalscorers** **4.10** **Pawn Stars** **5.10** **Hornblower** **7.25** **World Cup Qualifier Live**. Belarus v Netherlands (Kick-off 7.45pm). **10.00** **River Monsters** **11.00** **World Cup Qualifier Highlights** **12.30** **The Sweeney** **1.35** **The Classic Car Show** **2.25** **The Car Chasers** **2.50** **ITV4** **Nightscreen** **3.00** **Teleshopping**
E4
12.00 **The Big Bang Theory** **3.00** **Don't Tell the Bride** **4.00** **The Great British Bake Off** **5.15** **The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice** **6.00** **The Big Bang Theory** **9.00** **Film: The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1** (2011) **11.20** **Naked Attraction** **12.30** **Gogglebox**
Film4
11.00 **Spy Kids** **4: All the Time in the World** (2011) **1.00** **The Boxtrolls** (2014) **2.50** **Parental Guidance** (2012) **4.55** **Crocodile Dundee** (1986) **6.50** **Crocodile Dundee II** (1988) **9.00** **Unbroken** (2014) **11.40** **Underworld: Awakening** (2012) **1.20** **White God** (2014) **3.45** **Close**

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

FANTASTIC CARVERY 7 DAYS A WEEK

They always say never judge a book by its cover so we decided to check out The Park Lane Tavern in Colley Gate, and I have to say what was on offer in there was a total surprise.



It serves a carvery option 7 days a week from midday which consists of a choice of 4 meats, turkey, beef, pork and gammon and accompanied by stuffing, Yorkshire puddings and up to 12 vegetables, topped off with what they call their "secret recipe gravy" known also as what mother used to make! All this for just £4.99 for a lunchtime meal or £5.99 evenings and Saturdays and £7.99 for Sunday lunch represents extremely good value by today's standards.

They also don't forget their mini diners with 'Kids Eat Free' Monday to Saturday between 3pm and 6pm and during school holidays it's All Day Monday to Saturday.

But it doesn't stop their they also have a full main menu consisting of the classic pub favourites such as steaks, mixed grills, burgers and fish and chips, where the fish would not be out of place in any issue of 'Moby Dick'. To finish is there very tempting dessert menu, that's if you have room after the size of meals you get at The Park Lane Tavern.

Then if that's not enough choice for you you can also choose for the breakfast which is served Friday, Saturday and Sunday 08.30am until 11.00am. Their breakfast is a buffet style 'All you can eat' with enough choice to satisfy any diner from eggs 2 ways, bacon, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans, hash browns, black pudding, grilled fresh tomatoes, toast & fried bread. There's even



jam for your toast if you still not full after all that.

Half Price Monday

They also host special evenings like their 'Half Price Monday' which has proven to be very popular, and why not, already reasonably priced selected main meals off their main menu (which includes steaks) at half price served between 5pm and 8pm every Monday. Also their psychic evenings where for £15 you get a reading from a medium and a carvery, for those believers amongst you that must be a bargain.

You get a very friendly feeling when you enter The Park Lane Tavern and that's mostly down to the staff. Happy to see you and always keen to help. They have a lot of regular customers and it's been known for a customer's drink to be poured and waiting for them before they reach the bar, you don't see that at many places nowadays.

There are no airs or graces at The Park Lane Tavern, you get delicious food at great prices served by happy staff in a comfortable environment. No wonder this place has people returning time after time.

CHOICE



Louis Theroux

Louis Theroux: Dark States - Heroin Town (BBC2, 9pm)
In Huntington, West Virginia, Louis Theroux embeds himself in an Appalachian community that is being devastated and stretched to its limits by widespread heroin use. He spends time with members of the user community that are caught in the grip of drug addiction, and follows the emergency services as they struggle to cope with multiple overdoses each day.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.45** Points of View. **4.00** Lifeline. **4.10** Songs of Praise. **4.45** Who Do You Think You Are? (R) **5.45** BBC News. **6.05** Regional Programme. **6.15** Countryfile. Anita Rani and Matt Baker visit Dumfries House in East Ayrshire. They discover how the estate employs many local people and provides young people with a chance to develop traditional craft skills and work with the rare breed cattle on the house's farms. Plus, Charlotte Smith investigates how electric cars will be powered and Adam Henson checks up on his pregnant sheep and cows. **7.15** Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Claudia Winkleman and Tess Daly reveal the next couple to leave the contest. **8.00** Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Nymans Gardens near Crawley. Items brought in to be valued include an axe used in one of George Mallory's ascents of Everest, a sofa that put in an appearance in a classic movie, a diver's watch and a bag of trinkets found on top of a wardrobe that turns out to contain something unexpected. **9.00** The Last Post. Mary goes into labour while her husband has left the city to rendezvous with the SAS, who are returning to Aden after a secret mission to capture a dangerous fugitive. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Sir Bobby Charlton at 80. Documentary celebrating the life and career of the former Manchester United footballer, who won the World Cup with England on home soil in 1966, as he approaches his 80th birthday. **11.35** The Women's Football Show. A look at the biggest issues in the women's game, focusing on matters at both club and international level. **12.10** The Graham Norton Show. (R) **1.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.25 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.25** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.25** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.55** Countryfile. (R) **9.50** Saturday Kitchen: Best Bites. **11.20** Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking. (R) **11.50** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.35** Alfred Hitchcock: Talking Pictures. (R) **1.15** Film: Dial M for Murder. (1954) Alfred Hitchcock's thriller, starring Ray Milland. **3.00** Gymnastics: World Championships. **5.00** Rugby League Grand Final Highlights. **6.00** Top Gear. Rory Reid and Sabine Schmitz go in search of the latest supercars at Germany's Nurburgring circuit, while Matt LeBlanc test drives the Aston Martin DB11, but finds Chris Harris and his Mercedes causing no end of trouble. Tamsin Greig takes to the Top Gear Test Track as this week's Star in a Reasonably Fast Car. (R) **7.00** Russia with Simon Reeve. The adventurer embarks on a journey across the world's biggest country, taking him from the snow-capped volcanoes of the far east, through some of the remotest parts of the planet, to the great cities of the west, Moscow and St Petersburg. (R) **8.00** Dragons' Den. The panel assesses the profit-making potential of business plans for a range of eco mannequins, cork-based yoga mats, and a cycling navigation device. Presented by Evan Davis. **9.00** Louis Theroux: Dark States - Heroin Town. In Huntington, West Virginia, Louis Theroux embeds himself in an Appalachian community that is being devastated and stretched to its limits by widespread heroin use. **10.00** Snowfall. New series. An educated young man seeks a way to get on in life. Hard-hitting drama about the beginnings of the crack epidemic in 1980s Los Angeles. Damson Idris stars. **10.55** Mock the Week. Angela Barnes, Ed Byrne, Ed Gamble, Milton Jones and Nish Kumar join host Dara O Brain and regular Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R) **11.30** Film: Oranges and Sunshine. (2010) A social worker discovers thousands of British children have been sent to care homes in Australia and suffered abuse. Fact-based drama, starring Emily Watson. **1.10** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.10** Holby City. (R) **3.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission: Impossible. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** Amazing Animal Births. (R) **11.25** Robson Green's Coastal Lives. (R) **11.55** Bigheads. (R) **12.55** ITV News: Weather. **1.00** The Chase. (R) **2.00** The X Factor: Bootcamp. (R) **3.30** Victoria. (R) **4.30** World Cup Qualifier Live. Lithuania v England (Kick-off 5.00pm). **1.15** Regional Programme: Weather. **7.20** ITV News: Weather. **7.30** The X Factor: Six Chair Challenge. Dermot O'Leary hosts the first of three six chair challenge episodes, in which each judge must choose six acts to go forward to the next stage of the contest in the Judges' Houses. The judges must make the decision as soon as each act has performed - but are free to change their mind should someone better come along later in the show. **9.00** Victoria. After a series of assassination attempts, the queen is forced to seek sanctuary far from the palace. She and Albert travel to the Scottish Highlands, an area that has always fascinated her, but proves to be far from the romantic retreat she had fantasised about. However, travelling incognito gives both the royal couple and their servants a freedom they do not often experience. Denis Lawson guest stars. **10.00** ITV News: Weather. **10.15** Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston and Allegra Stratton, featuring reports on the latest issues and interviews with topical guests. (R) **11.15** World Cup Qualifier Highlights. Jacqui Oatley presents action from the latest fixtures, including Lithuania v England and Slovenia v Scotland in Group F, and Norway v Northern Ireland in Group C. **12.15** Liar. (R) **1.10** Jackpot247.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Kevin Can Wait. **6.45** Kevin Can Wait. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.35** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **3.00** Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Highlights. **5.15** The Great British Bake Off. (R) **6.30** Channel 4 News. **7.00** Escape to the Chateau. Dick and Angel look ahead to wedding season, with eight couples booking the chateau for their big day. Dick also converts a stone barn into a flat for Angel's parents, getting rid of 150 years' worth of rubbish in the process, but tensions rise between the couple when he gets carried away with the trees at the front of the property. Last in the series. **8.00** Escape. A group of five engineers is challenged to escape from a simulated landscape that has caused several vehicles to fall into a deep canyon. Presented by Ant Middleton. **9.00** Electric Dreams: Crazy Diamond. A married man's life is turned upside down by an encounter with a mysterious woman that leaves him smitten. He discovers is actually a dangerous synthetic being and has an illegal plan that will transform his life if he helps. All his wife's worst fears are confirmed as she leads him into a series of disasters that threatens to destroy everything they hold dear. Steve Buscemi, Julia David, Sidse Babbett Knudsen and Joanna Scanlan star in the fourth of the series of sci-fi tales, based on Philip K. Dick's short story Sales Pitch. **10.05** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show's version of the words-and-numbers quiz, with captain Jon Richardson and Jason Manford take on guest captain Alan Carr and Katherine Ryan. (R) **11.05** Film: The Secret Life of Walter Mitty. (2013) An ordinary man who drifts through life by disappearing into daydreams is forced to embark on an adventure in real life. Comedy drama, with Ben Stiller and Kristen Wiig. **1.10** WWII's Great Escapes: The Freedom Trails. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Poppy Cat. **6.10** Little Princess. (R) **6.25** Mr Men. (R) **6.35** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.45** Simon. (R) **6.50** Wissper. (R) **7.00** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.10** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.35** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.45** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.15** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.30** Floogals. (R) **8.45** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.55** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.15** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.25** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.00** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **10.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.30** Film: Innerspace. (1987) Sci-fi comedy, starring Dennis Quaid. **2.50** Film: Mannequin. (1987) **4.35** Film: Annie. (1982) **5.35** 5 News Update. **5.40** Film: Annie. (1982) John Huston's musical, with Aileen Quinn and Albert Finney. **7.05** Deep-Sea Super Predator. Documentary following the search for a mysterious creature that is large enough to hunt down and devour a three-metre great white shark. (R) **8.00** Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights. Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman introduce action from the sixth round of matches, including Harlequins v Sale Sharks, Exeter Chiefs v Newcastle Falcons, and Saracens v Wasps. **8.55** 5 News Weekend. **9.00** Film: Wild Card. (2015) Premiere. A Las Vegas bodyguard with a gambling problem finds himself on the wrong side of a mob boss. Action thriller, starring Jason Statham and Michael Angarano. **10.00** 5 News Update. **10.05** Film: Wild Card. (2015) Premiere. A Las Vegas bodyguard with a gambling problem finds himself on the wrong side of a mob boss. Action thriller, starring Jason Statham and Michael Angarano. **11.05** Film: Safe. (2012) A former cage fighter protects a 12-year-old girl holding valuable information that several criminal factions want. Action thriller, starring Jason Statham and Catherine Chan. **12.50** Car Crash TV. **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Film: A Lonely Place to Die. (2011) **4.50** Divine Designs. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.40** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **5.50** Access. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Only Connect **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Addicted to Sheep **9.00** Horizon **10.00** The Sky at Night **10.30** The Search for a New Earth **12.00** Dancing Cheek to Cheek: An Intimate History of Dance **1.00** Addicted to Sheep **2.00** Horizon **3.00** Close
ITV2
11.10 2Awesome: Ready, Set, Style **11.20** 2Awesome: Third Wheel **11.50** The X Factor: Bootcamp **1.20** Take Me Out **2.35** You've Been Framed: Gold Top 100 Animals **3.35** Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **4.35** FYI Daily **4.40** Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **5.15** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **6.15** FYI Daily **6.20** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **7.20** Film: The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (2014) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25** Film: The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (2014) **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.55** The Cleveland Show **1.25** Through the Keyhole **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
1.00 Film: Blue Murder at St Trinian's (1957) **2.05** FYI Daily **2.10** Film: Blue Murder at St Trinian's (1957) **2.55** Film: Columbo: By Dawn's Early Light (1974) **5.00** Lewis **7.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Sunday Night at the Palladium **10.00** Honest **11.05** Film: Changeling (2008) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10** Film: Changeling (2008) **1.50** The Knock **2.45** Mr Selfridge **3.35** Lewis
ITV4
1.40 Film: Jeremiah Johnson (1972) **2.45** FYI Daily **2.50** Film: Jeremiah Johnson (1972) **3.55** Film: The Way West (1967) **4.55** FYI Daily **5.00** Film: The Way West (1967) **6.20** River Monsters **8.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **9.00** Film: The Devil's Advocate (1997) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: The Devil's Advocate (1997) **11.55** Car Crash Global **12.55** The Sweeney
E4
11.00 Don't Tell the Bride **12.00** My Hottest Half **1.00** The Big Bang Theory: Biggest Bangs **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Ice Age 3: Dawn of the Dinosaurs (2009) **9.55** Film: Speed 2: Cruise Control (1997)
Film4
11.00 The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery (1966) **1.00** Hercules (1983) **3.05** Stuart Little 2 (2002) **4.40** Dr Doolittle 2 (2001) **6.20** Robin Hood (2010) **9.00** Gladiator (2000) **12.00** Knight and Day (2010) **2.10** The Selfish Giant (2013) **4.00** Close



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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Blade: Trinity, Channel 5, 11.05pm
 The fearless warrior's blood-sucking foes frame him for murder, forcing him to go on the run from the FBI while his enemies resurrect the first and most powerful of their kind – Dracula himself. Joining forces with a team of human vampire slayers, Blade embarks on a quest to wipe out the undead menace once and for all. Fantasy action thriller sequel, with Wesley Snipes and Jessica Biel. (2004)

TUESDAY
Fatal Honeymoon, Channel 5, 3.15pm
 A woman goes on honeymoon to Australia, only to drown during a scuba-diving trip to the Great Barrier Reef. Her father is not convinced this was an accident, and begins to suspect her husband may have murdered her. A year later, he finally finds the evidence to prove his accusation. Fact-based crime drama, starring Harvey Keitel and Billy Miller. (2012)



Wild Card, Thursday, Channel 5, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY
A Mother's Fear, Channel 5, 3.15pm
 A single mother resolves to discover the cause of her son's mysterious illness. Her investigation leads her to a corporation involved in genetically modified food and two scientists who are on the verge of a groundbreaking new discovery. Drama, starring Zoe Lister-Jones, Danny Glover and Victor Garber. (2015)

THURSDAY
Wild Card, Channel 5, 11.05pm
 Las Vegas bodyguard Nick Wild finds himself dealing with more than just his gambling problem after he takes revenge on the criminal who attacked his friend, little realising that the thug in question is the son of a mob boss. Action thriller, starring Jason Statham, Michael Angarano and Milo Ventimiglia. (2015)

FRIDAY
As Above, So Below, Channel 4, 12.10am
 An expedition ventures into a network of underground tunnels beneath Paris. As they explore the catacombs, the archaeologists experience a series of strange events and come under attack from a mysterious unknown force that seems to know their darkest secrets. Horror, starring Perdita Weeks. (2014)

Returning drama series takes a shocking new turn

Life is never dull for Georgie Lane – and you get the impression she wants to keep it that way.

The last time we saw her, the experienced Army medic was coming to terms with being kidnapped in Kenya, but clearly the trauma involved with that situation hasn't put her off serving on the front line, because she's back in action when the new, third series begins.

This time, it's a longer run of 12 episodes featuring three stories.

"With an expanded 12-part series commission, this time Our Girl will follow our characters on three distinct missions in far-flung, dangerous parts of the globe - and we cannot wait to bring their new adventures back to BBC One," claims executive producer Caroline Skinner.

"I'm so happy that we'll be back for another series as I think there's definitely more stories to tell with Georgie," stated Michelle Keegan, who plays her, after the transmission

of the second run. "The reaction to the show has been overwhelming and I'm really thankful to everyone who's watched and supported it. It was an amazing experience filming with such an incredible group of people and I can't wait to do it all over again."

It's certainly taken her a long way from Coronation Street, where she initially made her name.

She isn't, of course, the only soap star to have featured in the acclaimed drama.

When it first began, Lacey Turner took the lead role of Molly Dawes while on hiatus from EastEnders, a teenager who decided that the military offered her a new lease of life away from the dreariness and lack of hope she felt at home. She had to turn down further adventures when she returned to Albert Square to play Stacey.

Our Girl's creator, Tony Grounds, also had a stint as an EastEnders writer, so knows how serial drama works, which is perhaps why this project appeals so much to a wide

audience; he has the inside track in making characters compelling, inspiring viewers to keep coming back for more.

This time around, the action begins in Nepal, as Grounds reveals: "On a disaster relief mission to Nepal after an earthquake hits the country, 2 Section is thrown into a perilous and life-changing situation. Michelle Keegan, brilliantly reprising her role as Corporal Georgie Lane, shows remarkable courage in the face of adversity and inspires the troops to perform their duty with bravery and compassion."

As well as carrying out her regular duties as a medic, Georgie is also entrusted with mentoring reckless new recruit Maisie, whose behaviour could put others in danger.

However, Georgie is soon distracted by handsome Nepalese engineer Milan, who is also helping the relief effort. They quickly form a close bond while working together to rebuild the area, but their lives are soon at risk when an aftershock rocks the village they were visiting.



Our Girl – Nepal Tour, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Steph and Dom's One Star to Five Star Channel 4, 5.30pm
 New series. Former Gogglebox stars and B&B owners Steph and Dom Parker help people whose hotels and guest-houses are struggling, as well as those just starting out in business, aiming to take each establishment from the lowest rating to a luxury one in just five days. On arrival at the Ransdale Hotel in Bridlington, East Yorkshire, the couple challenge the owners to expand their breakfast menu, create a seaside-themed bedroom and throw a beach party for the general public. But how will today's guests rate their efforts?

TUESDAY
The Great British Bake Off Channel 4, 8pm
 The amateur cooks take part in Italian week, which culminates in a fiddly showstopper in the hottest temperatures ever recorded in the tent. Before that, under the ever watchful gaze of judges Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith, the contestants dish up a Sicilian signature that gets them all hot under the collar and a deceptively tricky technical. Noel Fielding and Sandi Toksvig are on hand to keep the bakers in line as the pressure of reaching the final stages of the competition intensifies.

Russia 1917: Countdown to Revolution BBC2, 9pm
 A look at Russia's transition from tsarist autocracy to communist state, focusing on the involvement of three men – Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, all of whom emerged from obscurity to forge an entirely new political system in the space of a few months. This drama-documentary examines the 245 days that brought these men to supreme power. As the history unfolds writers and historians, including Martin Amis, Orlando Figes, Helen Rappaport, Simon Sebag Montefiore and China Mieville, battle over the meaning of the Russian Revolution and explore how it shaped the world of today. Narrated by Juliet Stevenson.

WEDNESDAY
Eat Well for Less? BBC1, 8pm
 After a break, Gregg Wallace and Chris Bavin return to show more families that they can eat better and cut their bills at the same time – and they're starting with the biggest clan to date. Single mum Angela has five daughters, aged between eight and 18, and as if feeding them all wasn't tough

enough, one of her girls has Coeliac disease and another has Coeliac and Type 1 diabetes. Angela's lack of confidence in the kitchen has left her reliant on convenience foods, but with her girls all wanting different things, it's not proving to be very convenient. Gregg and Chris's first step is to get her to stop shopping daily for that night's dinner and instead start planning gluten-free meals the whole family can enjoy together.



The Last Leg, Friday, Channel 4, 10pm

THURSDAY
An Hour to Catch a Killer with Trevor McDonald ITV, 9pm
 It's known as 'the golden hour' – the first 60 minutes of a murder investigation, where every decision is crucial and can make the difference between whether a killer is caught and convicted or walks free. To provide an insight into why that time window matters so much, Trevor McDonald presents this documentary, which follows the Northumbria

homicide detectives as they investigate the death of a young woman. From the moment the body is discovered, the entire murder squad record the investigation on their HD body cameras, taking viewers inside the crime scene where an ordinary camera crew couldn't go for fear of contaminating evidence.

FRIDAY
A Celebrity Taste of Italy Channel 5, 9pm
 Judith Chalmers, Ian Lavender, Rula Lenska, Johnny Ball and Diana Moran sample some Italian-style rest and relaxation. Rula and Diana head off to the local sulphur springs to search for the secret of eternal youth in its volcanic mud. As they slather up, Johnny and Judith find a whole new use for olive oil – being massaged in it.

The Last Leg Channel 4, 10pm
 Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker are joined by guests Armando Iannucci and Sue Perkins for a comic review of the significant moments of the past seven days. The group members offer their own unique insight into some of the most difficult and delicate issues in modern Britain, and answer that most important of questions: is it OK?

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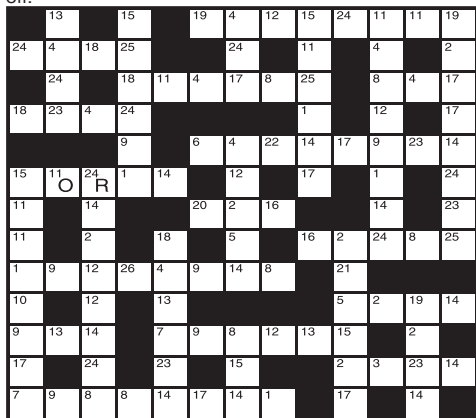


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No.450

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
W	H	O	C	P	E	S	Q	J	K	Z	I	L
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
M	B	G	D	V	X	U	F	T	A	Y	N	R

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11 O	24 R
12	25
13	26

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

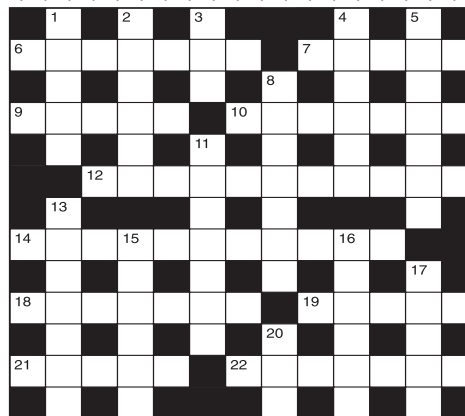
Cryptic Clues:

Across

6. Unusually precise instructions to the cook (7)
7. Stage scenery for domestic units (5)
9. See 21 Across
10. Festival possessed Arthurian figure (7)
12. Sieges that may provide considerable interest (11)
14. Nippers living on their own? (6,5)
18. I could be in one rut, keeping to this (7)
19. Tree situated in fenced areas (5)
- 21 & 9Ac. Kind of agent protected by insurance! (5,5)
22. It will show the temperature of a planet (7)

Down

1. Brush seen in Entebbe sometimes (5)
2. Kind of iron age bird! (6)
3. See 20 Down
4. Many quit, yet still stick together (6)
5. Artist's different version - of Dover? (7)
8. This provides electricity for the artillery unit (7)
11. Disturbing the game but coming out the winner (7)
13. Sapper obliged to show resilience (7)
15. Molecular structure to be of importance (6)
16. Opening the back of the gun, by the sound of it (6)
17. Youngster one found in grain store (5)
- 20 & 3Dn. Part of the map of the Middle East could be erased (3,3)



Quick Clues:

Across

6. Scales (7)
7. Jovial (5)
9. Fortunate (5)
10. Pledge (7)
12. Wage earner (5-6)
14. Reach a climax (4,2,1,4)
18. Barbarous (7)
19. Composition (5)
21. Trivial (5)
22. Artful (7)

Down

1. Ill-defined (5)
2. Pedestrian (6)
3. Work (3)
4. Universal (6)
5. Bunch (7)
8. Excrescences (7)
11. Tea urn (7)
13. Contrary (7)
15. Justice (6)
16. Away (6)
17. Boast (5)
20. Merriment (3)

	5			2	7			
		6		3	9			4
9	8			6	1	7		
	6					4		
	7			4			6	
		1			5		2	
		5	2				3	1
3	4		9	1		6		
			3	5				9

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S

SOLUTIONS:

9	3	8	4	6	7	1	2	5
4	1	5	3	8	2	6	9	7
2	6	7	1	9	5	8	4	3
7	5	9	6	4	8	3	1	2
1	8	3	7	2	9	4	5	6
6	4	2	5	3	1	9	7	8
8	9	6	2	5	4	7	3	1
3	2	1	9	7	6	5	8	4
5	7	4	8	1	3	2	6	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC Across: 7 Healed; 8 Breach;
10 Hydrant; 11 Check; 12 Arch; 13 Tense;
17 Brick; 18 Dene; 22 Arise; 23 Esparto;
24 Pilots; 25 Coarse. Down: 1 The head;
2 Haddock; 3 Nepal; 4 Process; 5 Layer;
6 Shake; 9 Stretcher; 14 Priests; 15 Bearers;
16 Recover; 19 Wasps; 20 Villa; 21 Spool.
QUICK - Across: 7 Apathy; 8 Madden;
10 Sharpen; 11 Nerve; 12 Vile; 13 Greed;
17 Bait; 18 Rascal; 19 Racket;
24 Fettle; 25 Censor. Down: 1 Massive;
2 Manacle; 3 Shape; 4 Saunter; 5 Adore;
6 Under; 9 Intrusion; 14 Brittle; 15 Because;
16 Vesture; 19 Staff; 20 Acute; 21 Steep.

Quiz

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Which great British actor's middle name was Kerr? | 6. Which African leader was called 'The Lion of Judah'? |
| 2. What is the collective name for the first five books of the Old Testament? | 7. Which composer was nicknamed 'the Waltz King'? |
| 3. Which Greek actress died of lung cancer in March 1994? | 8. With which US political party has Tammany Hall been associated? |
| 4. What is the name of Seurat's technique of painting with dots? | 9. Which military vehicle was invented by Ernest Swinton? |
| 5. Which pop group had a hit with 'Mornningtown Ride'? | 10. Which sleepy character was invented by Washington Irving in 1819? |

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Female: 2 Philippines: 3 Eddie Grundy:

- 4 Home Guard; 5 OJ Simpson;
6 Electrocardiogram; 7 Lhasa; 8 Zinc;
9 Uruguay; 10 Electrical resistance.

Niner: PERSONIFY

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

32156
47453
956128

gives a tree,
gives a second tree,
gives a fertile spot.

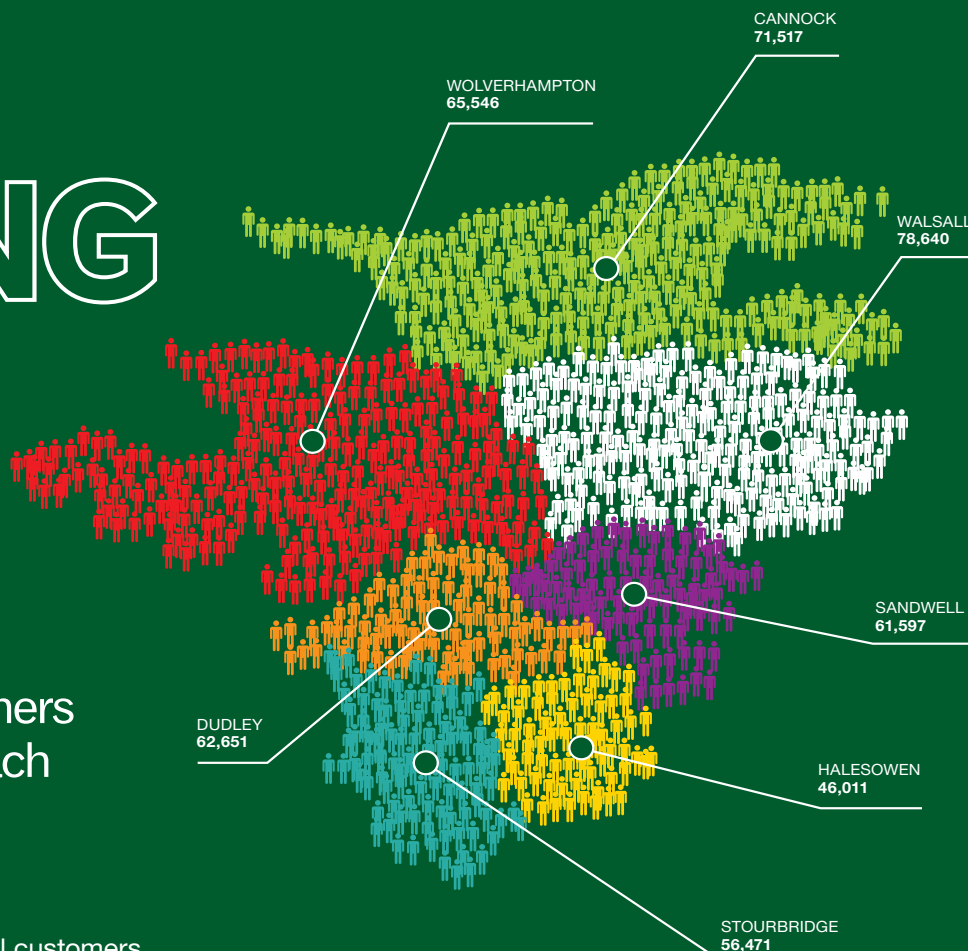
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Wagamama's – food that woks

It was a busy day off work. While the rest of the city was facing the nine-to-five, we were racing around attending various appointments. Places to go, people to see, so we really needed a quick ladies-that-lunch kind of meal.

There were loads of options, with Italian, burgers and pub grub all on the menu. But we decided to go for something wholesome and a brand that was a firm favourite for both of us. Wagamama's has been going for 25 years and boasts more than 120 restaurants in the UK alone. We dropped in at the new outlet in New Street, Birmingham.

The concept is truly Japanese. The menu is varied with many little nibbly bits, ramen (broth) noodle dishes, teppanyaki (sizzling noodles), donburi (steamed rice) curries with drinks including fresh juices, Asian beers and traditional Japanese rice wine sake. While it has added to its menu over the years it has kept some of its original dishes.

QUIET

From the outside it seemed fairly quiet but everyone was seated at the back. There were tables outside and for a Tuesday lunchtime, it was just the right amount of busy. I already knew what I'd be having before I stepped inside but happily perused the menu just in case something different jumped out at me.

My friend opted for lots of smaller plates and a diet Coke whereas I went for edamame beans and a chicken katsu curry with a glass of Prosecco.

We both ordered the edamame beans which are popped into the mouth to enjoy the salty soya flavour. It always seems like a healthy option and gives a virtuous feeling especially as I was enjoying my glass of fizz.



My curry was up next. A gorgeous mound of perfectly cooked rice, boiled and not at all sticky or stodgy with the Panko breaded sliced chicken smothered in the gorgeous katsu curry sauce. There was a lovely side salad with a fiery ginger garnish on the side which added some refreshment from the heat of the curry.

The sauce was thick and smooth and there was lots of it. My friend couldn't decide what to have so went for the chilli squid, ebi katus and a raw salad. She picked at her dishes as they each arrived, devouring bits from each with a contented look creeping into her smile. The

crispy fried squid was dusted with the spice shichimi. It also comes with a chilli and coriander dipping sauce. She loved the squid, said it was perfectly cooked.

The ebu katsu was crispy fried prawns in panko breadcrumbs, served with a spicy chilli and garlic sauce. The perfect soft fishy pieces were a delicious contrast to the crunchy coating of breadcrumbs and the chilli dip added some fire to the light prawn flavour.

The raw salad was a lovely healthy option with mixed leaves, edamame beans, baby plum tomatoes, seaweed and pickled mooli, carrot and red onion and all of it

The seating arrangements



topped with fried shallots and the wagamama house dressing. She ate the lot saying it was fresh and zingy and very well dressed.

There were desserts on offer but none really took our fancy. In any case we had dresses to try on so didn't want any extra unnecessary bulges!

A bill of £44.05 was reasonable for the amount of food we had ordered. It was a great experience and the staff were friendly and smiley throughout making the meal all the more enjoyable.

LISA WILLIAMS

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I am a discreet married black lady who is hoping to meet a man of any colour for some daytime chats. maybe meet up, maybe just text to prolong the interest in our ways. Text Only. Box 4063856

DAWN, attractive, easygoing. WLTm mature male for fun loving no strings romance. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428417

GEORGINA, 46yrs, sophisticated professional lady (teacher), quite firm but kind! Interested in finding out more? I am interested to chat to you so call me today. Text Only. Box: 4151593

LINDA, attractive fun loving, pretty 43yr old, confident but not pushy, looking to enjoy good times with male 40plus. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428883

SASKA, kind hearted Asian lady, single and still living with family so seeking very discreet relationship with strong minded man. I am 29yrs but like mature experienced men. Text Only. Box: 4047094

CARING, thoughtful, young at heart lady, 70s, seeking tall, slim, caring guy with GSOH, for a relaxed friendship and outings. Car driver would be nice. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428871

MIA, attractive married lady from Birmingham, are looking to meet a discreet gent, any age, any area for fun times. I am 49yrs old but look younger. Text Only. Box: 4079581

FEMALE 46, honest, genuine and caring. Looking for LTR with a male. Text only replies. Box no: 4209465

TINA, 47yrs, GSOH and good figure with average looks. I want a similar man. GSOH looks unimportant. Age is but a number. I have no car but can accommodate. Text Only. Box: 4145368

TRACY, dark eyed brunette, 39, outgoing, down to earth, fit and active has much to offer someone special. Looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428783

JANE, new to area, hoping to meet an older gent. I am 38yrs, brunette with boyish leggy figure. N/S with GSOH. I've a good job and small flat which I own. Text Only. Box: 4099268

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters AKA. Tel No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. AKA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

FRANCESCA 50s, lively blue eyed blonde, many interests, WLTm similar young at heart romantic male for amazing fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428755

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters AKA. Tel No: 0906 515 3008 Box: 409715

MARY 46, shy curvy brunette looking for someone to be a good fun friend, to laugh with and love. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428073

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

SUSANNA, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428661

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent of any age for no strings fun. AKA. Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 421375

ATTRACTIVE lady, 45yrs, loves animals, music, socialising. If you have similar interests then call or text me. Lets meet up and spend time together. Looks unimportant, must be GSOH. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428811

TAMIKKA, mature black beauty, hourglass figure and open minded. Pls call if you are discreet, broad minded and nice. I can travel and accommodate. AKA. Tel: 0906 515 3007 Box 422365

TAKE a chance on me. Beryl, honest black lady. Seeking a gent 50-75 ish, who will treat me with respect. I will be respectful to you, mutual fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428809

SAMANTHA, 35yrs, attractive brunette with own business, seeks adventurous gent for casual relationship. Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box 425979

CAROL 49, feminine lady WLTm optimistic fun male to see what the future brings. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428577

MICHELLE, 44yrs, attractive lady, great company, hoping to meet mature gent 50+ for loving relationship. AKA/Text answered. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428803

HARRIETT 42yrs, blue eyed brunette with long lets and decent curves! Looking for a cheeky adventurous man for fun only. I live alone so can accommodate and can travel. Discretion assured. AKA. Give me a try. Tel: 0906 515 3031 Box 426205

SUE, attractive lady, genuine with many interests. I'm attractive with feminine curves. If you are a caring loving man under 70yrs call me for good times. AKA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428801

CARMEL, open minded naughty lady seeks a broad minded strict man to unleash her wilder side. Age/looks unimportant but no time wasters please. Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 426851

IF you want to meet a mature busty blonde lady then look no further. Call me, I'm interested in meeting a man who wants a physical relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428799

CAROLINE, 42yrs, well educated, sophisticated "some call me posh" married lady, looking for no strings midweek liaisons. Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box 427533

SUSAN, articulate interesting lady, 60yrs, loves countryside and music. Hoping to meet a genuine man of any age. All calls and texts answered. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428797

ANGELA, attractive 66yr old free minded and spirited lady. Genuine with varied interests seeks gent 65+. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428485

SUSANNA, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428661

CHARLOTTE 33, classy curvy blonde looking for something a bit different WLTm kind, loving, fit male for some fun and excitement. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428563

MARIA 44, leggy blonde seeks tall professional male for fun nights out, cosy nights in with plenty of TLC and romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428447

KATHERINE 39, romantic, slim, feminine, loves to live life to the full, seeks adventurous outgoing male to appreciate and share fun times with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428403

PAT, 69, young looking, looking for someone for friendship, interests are going out for meals, reading and walking. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428461

HEATHER, 54yrs, slim brunette with petite figure, loves keep fit. Seeks chap for nights out, fun times, must be honest and kind. AKA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428491

VICTORIA, 46yrs, bubbly outgoing nurse, petite pretty brunette. WLTm N/S man, any age, must have GSOH and be kind. AKA. Or text. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428489

MARIA 44, leggy blonde seeks tall professional male for fun nights out, cosy nights in with plenty of TLC and romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428447

SALLY young 50, happy go lucky blonde, looking to let her hair down with a happy, down to earth guy with dark hair. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428269

CARING, young at heart lady seeks tall caring gent with GSOH for friendship, outings and car drives. Text only replies. Mailbox: 6042252

Single Men

Hi I am a single Indian male in my 50s, and would like to meet a mature female 55+ for a NSA friendship. Text only replies. Box no: 4627019

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MALE, age 68, very active looking for lady for NSA fun. Can accommodate. Text only replies. Mailbox: 6026972

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MALE seeks affectionate, tactile, no drama, down to earth woman for nights in/out and loads of cuddles. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418695

ADVENTUROUS 36 year old, slim, dark hair, has many interests, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235

MALE would like to meet local female 50+ for a mutual friendship. I'm easygoing and have many interests. Text only replies. Mailbox: 5071056

COLIN 72, from Burntwood, looking for loving lady for days out, holidays and company. Text only replies. Mailbox: 4880436

MALE, 20s, seeks NSA fun with female. I love a laugh, age isn't important. Text only replies. Mailbox: 6042304

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07717 280 996
www.tscaravansandmotorhomes.co.uk

TOURING CARAVAN WANTED.
No objection to work, anything
considered. Please telephone
07980 365757.

Jumble Sales / Fetes

BRIC-A-BRAC FAIR
Sunday, 8th October
Next Sale October 22
KINVER COMMUNITY
CENTRE, DY7 6ER
10.30am - 4pm
Tel: 01384 894464

Music Shop

BASS GUITARIST / BACKING
SINGER (56), wishes to join / form
a band. 07828 196505.

VOCALIST REQUIRED
FOR ROCK BLUES BAND.

Wolverhampton area.

07587 222729.

what's on

Antique Fairs

**ANTIQUE/
COLLECTORS
VINTAGE FAIR**
CORNBOW HALL, HAGLEY STREET,
HALESOWEN, B63 3AT
13TH OCT
8.00AM - 3.30PM
07783 680 627

3

Home & Services

Furniture

DOUBLE BED luxury memory foam
pocket sprung mattress, all unused.
Cost over £300. Accept £185.
Telephone 07787 636984.

ITALIAN TYPE Sideboard, tall
corner unit, TV stand, all matching,
immaculate condition. £120 ono.
01902 780157

OLD CHARM Canted display
cabinet, medium oak, immaculate
condition. Offers. £500. Tettenhall,
Wolverhampton. 01902 752649.

Household Appliances

DYSON DC40 5 months old, cost
£200, sell £150. Good working con-
dition, only used once. Please call
01302 654177.

Items For Sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDER

That the Business Advertisers
(Disclosure) Order of
1977 requires that advertise-
ments must clearly differentiate
between Private and Trade.

ELECTRIC RADIATOR
Portable on wheels, good
working order. £20. Juicing
Jack with handbook for fruit or
veg, was £200 sell £20. Petrol
mower, Champion, spares or
repair. £20.
01902 791441.

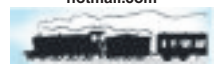
GARAGE DOOR Garador 6ft 6 x 7ft.
White, excellent condition. £100.
07760 340453.

Items Wanted

A BEST CASH PRICE

**FOR ALL RAILWAY
COLLECTIONS**
Any gauge or age

Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/
Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/
any live steam. Also Die Cast,
Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.
01384 836219/07891 713547
thetrainmaster67@
hotmail.com



A BEST CASH PRICE

**FOR ALL RAILWAY
COLLECTIONS**
Any gauge or age

Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/
Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/
any live steam. Also Die Cast,
Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.
01384 836219/07891 713547
thetrainmaster67@
hotmail.com



**A BEST CASH PRICE PAID
FOR DIE CAST CARS /
LORRIES / TOY SOLDIERS**
Air fix, Britains, Corgi, Dinky,
Spot on, Tri-ang.
Best prices paid.
Any condition.
Collections bought.
Telephone 01922 327897
or 07976 691563.



**AUTO MEMORABILIA
WANTED**
SHELL, ESSO,
CASTROL ETC
ALSO
GARAGE CLEARANCES
Old Enamel Signs,
Petrol Cans,
Old Jugs,
Bikes and Motorbikes.
Anything old.
** TOP PRICES PAID **
01384 836219/07891 713547

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Old Enamel Signs,
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Old Jugs,
Bikes and Motorbikes.
Anything old.
** TOP PRICES PAID **
01384 836219/07891 713547

COINS, MEDALS, BANK NOTES
Wanted by private collector.
Telephone 01902 676540.

READERS ARE ADVISED
to carefully consider all of their options
before agreeing to the sale of any
of their items.

WANTED VINTAGE TAMIYA REMOTE CONTROL MODELS

Also any old radio controlled
models in any condition,
Mardave, Kyocho, Traxxas, HPI
Team Associated, Schumacher

Big or small collections bought.

07568 585075 or
0121 532 2544.

WANTED VINTAGE TAMIYA REMOTE CONTROL MODELS

Also any old radio controlled
models in any condition,
Mardave, Kyocho, Traxxas, HPI
Team Associated, Schumacher

Big or small collections bought.

07568 585075 or
0121 532 2544.

WANTED OLD CLASSIC British
motorcycle, any make or model
considered. Telephone 01270
842206.

t.v. / home entertainment

Service

AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST
Any TV Repairs, Plasma, LED etc.
CCTV cameras supplied & fitted.
Any area. Free Estimates. 7 days.
Digital aerials, Sky installation, Wall
mounts / TV setups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

Aerials

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99
01902 858191 • 01384 429166
01543 439095 • 01922 716029

A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST
CCTV cameras fitted/tv wallmount,
free quote/any area. 07850 330251

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!



"I am very pleased
with the response
I get from my
Classified
Advertising
Contract"

Steve -
AA Digital Aerials

For great business
results call
01902 319 191

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Brought to you by Express & Star

Alarms/Security

PREMIER ALARMS

Supplied and Fitted £249
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

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**QUALITY DOORS AND HARD-
WOOD FLOORING** @ low prices.
Call Arnold Laver 0121 533 5428.

Fencing

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!



"I am extremely happy
with the service I get
from my Express &
Star Classified Sales
Representatives and
would recommend them
to anyone! They have
done a very professional
job with my website so
I get online enquiries as
well now."

Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business
results call
01902 319 191

ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

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"I am extremely happy with
the service I get from my
Express & Star Classified
Sales Representatives and
would recommend them to
anyone! They have done a
very professional job with
my website so I get online
enquiries as well now."

Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business
results call
01902 319 191

ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

PORTWAY FENCING
10 Days of quality fencing, concrete posts,
gravel boards **£695**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, W'bury
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

Gardening Services

GARDENS TIDIED from £5 per
garden. 25 years experience. Call
01902 713106 / 07813 184086.

H GARDEN SERVICES
No Job To Small!
Free Quotes!
07752 146554 or
07835 908090

Gas Fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone
carrying out any Gas work
is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas
Safety (Installation and Use)
Regulations 1998 to carry out
gas work in the UK without
being on the Gas Safe Register.

Oven Cleaning



Express & Star

OVEN CLEANERS!

**CLAIM
YOUR
FREE
ADVERT**
(T&Cs Apply)

Call Claire Smith: 01902 319661
claire.smith@expressandstar.co.uk

House Clearances

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid
for house clearances and bereave-
ments. Also removals undertaken.
07852 172641 / 07710 360327

Plastering

STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE
Clean and Reliable. All Work
Undertaken. All Areas. Call
0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

Removals

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your
Removal needs. 07429 453209/
01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

Skip Hire

MT SKIPS & GRAB HIRE
Save £££s
All size skips and all areas covered
Same day delivery faster than a phone call!!!!
Open 7 days a week.
07920 88 57 74 or 01384 24 09 56

**Scrap Cars
REMOVED FOR
FREE**

Rubbish Removal

LET'S TALK RUBBISH No Skips
Needed Load/Remove any Waste,
House Clearance. 07969 628382

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tisement today? We would respect-
fully remind advertisers that it is
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curacies on the first day of publica-
tion.

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**STOPPS PAGE & SONS
ROOFING**
We specialise in:
New Roofing, Re Roofing, Leak Repairs,
Emergency Repairs, Lead Work, Tiling and Slating.

07476 834512 0121 4204374
www.stoppsandpage.co.uk

**New Roofs,
Slatting, Tiling,
GRP Flat Roofs,
Chimneys, Guttering, Ridges,
Flashings uPVC Fascia Cladding.**

0121 602 0346
07904 736165



PEDIGREE black and Golden
Labrador Pups, dogs and bitches,
£400 each. 07938 598881.

STUNNING COCKAPOO pups, all
colours and genders. Ready Oct 1.
Call 07891 614333 for more info.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that
they meet all necessary legal
requirements for owning and using
guns.

**5
Business &
Farming**

Business Opportunities

READERS are recommended to
take appropriate professional
advice before entering into any
obligations.

**6
Property**

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek
independent legal advice before
entering into any financial commit-
ments/contracts.

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accom-
modation Agencies Act 1953, for an
Agency to charge a fee simply for
the registration of your require-
ments and/or supplying particulars
of premises to let.

DOUBLE ROOM, in shared house,
Willenhall Road. Furnished. £70pw
inc bills. 07904 106847.

PERTON modern one bed ground
floor flat, with parking. Suit profes-
sional. £100pwk. 07831 939349

SMART SINGLE ROOMS in Shared
house, Netherton. £35 p.w. inc.
bills. No DSS. 2 weeks deposit.
07940 116130.

THREE BED large house, Bilston,
garage, decorated, carpeted CH,
£500pcm. 07886 781724.

Flats for sale

GROUND FLOOR

APARTMENT

</

Properties Wanted

WE PAY 100% of purchase price FAST 4 Your House CASH



You agree the price, we buy the house...

- NO AGENTS FEES • COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU
- FREE SOLICITORS • ANY HOUSE, ANY CONDITION

0800 999 999 6
01384 500 500 30 yrs

www.black-countryhomes.co.uk * subject to terms

CASH NOW FOR YOUR HOUSE

UP TO £25,000 CASH ADVANCE NOW (in 24hrs)

0800 389 6788 01902 628047

Need to sell your house quick?

WE WILL BUY YOUR HOME...

FAST FOR CASH

Guaranteed sale in 48 Hours

- ☑ No Hassle For You
- ☑ No Commission or Surprises



Call us today on: **01902 50 44 48**
or visit our website: mpknights.co.uk

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"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!
Our directory page on expressandstar.com has generated extra activity on our website."

Paul Westwood - Home Cash Buyer

Classified Ads
Brought to you by Express & Star

For great business results call **01902 319 191**

Home Cash Buyer

Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££

Houses / Land Required

Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**

Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154

Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049

Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901

www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

I WILL BUY YOUR HOUSE

- Any Price • Any Condition • Any Area

Call Paula 01384 467643

- ★ Local ★ Independent ★ Confidential

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

Free Ads

IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
For items upto £250.
Online at
bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

Employment Wanted

EXPERIENCED bricklayer requires employment. All types of brickwork. Contact 07341 021774.

8

Motoring

Cars Over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.



AUDI A3 1.4 TFSI

2012, 65,000 miles, black, tinted windows and sub speaker, full service history, MoT until January 25, 2018, in good condition.

£8,000 ono.
07957 650446.



BMW 318i

2011, 79,000 miles, black, electric windows, air bag, air con, fsh, alarm, stereo, CD, leather interior.

£5,000 ono.

07906 423081.

FORD FIESTA STYLE +80
09 plate, 3-dr, 1242cc, Service history, very clean, MoT till August 2018, 62,000 miles, £3,250.

07814 447682



FORD FIESTA ZETEC

2007, 1.6TDCi 64,000 miles, blue, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, fsh, alarm, long MoT. Superb condition.

£2,195.

01902 897680.



MAZDA 2007 MX5 1.8 MK III
MoT till July 2018.

59,080 miles.

Very good condition.

£3,900 ono.

01902 333072.

Courses

BIRMINGHAM: 30 NOV - 1 DEC. & 27-28 JAN.
STOKE: 17-18 JAN. **TELFORD:** 25-26 JAN.
WOLVERHAMPTON: 6-7 DEC. & 8-9 MARCH

Learn how to take blood TRAIN AS A PHLEBOTOMIST

NATIONALLY RECOGNISED AND ACCREDITED
Introduction to Phlebotomy
TWO DAY COURSE - National UK Qualification
NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

For more info or to book: www.geopace.com

HIGH DEMAND IN: Hospitals - GP Surgeries - Clinics - Private Sector - Community - MOD



MINI 1.4 PETROL

2007, 3 door, 96,122 miles, metallic blue, abs, electric windows, air bag, fsh, alarm, alloy wheels, radio/CD player. 6 months MoT.

£1,750 ono.
01384 872846.



NISSAN MICRA

2010, 93,000 miles, 11 months MoT, fsh, abs, electric windows, air bag, air con, one owner, pas, alloys, CD, built in Sat Nav and Bluetooth.

£2,000 ono.
07786 988292.



NISSAN NAVARA OUTLAW

2009, 2.5DCi, twin cab, van truck with rear cover, alloys, new tyres, side steps, black with grey leather, EW, SR, very clean, 179,000 miles.

££££'s spent on vehicle.

£5,995

07411 414284.



PEUGEOT 206CC ALLURE

2005, 55 plate 46,000 miles, blue, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, air con, full service history, alarm, MoT. Amazing condition.

£1,695.

01902 897680.



PEUGEOT 308 SPORTIUM 1.6

5 door. 2011 (11). Two owners from new. FSH (74,000 miles). Full MoT. Alloys. A/C. Immaculate throughout.

£2,995.

Telephone 07970 705466.



RENAULT KANGOO DIESEL

2004, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, fsh, long MoT, central locking, one owner, pas, sunroof, CD, aircraft lockers, load cover, very good condition.

£1,599.

07879 403302.



TOYOTA YARIS 1.3

2005, 5dr hatchback. 2 lady owners from new. full MoT, recently serviced.

Service history.

Immaculate condition.

£1,650.

07467 562680.



VAUXHALL TIGRA CONVERTIBLE

1.8 litre, 2009, 24,000 miles, ice blue metallic, heated leather seats, long MoT, alarm, service history, reluctant sale.

£1,995 ono.

01384 287428.



VW POLO

1.2 S, 2006, 57000 Miles, One Owner, Full Service History, Brilliant Condition, 2 Keys, Alloys, A/C.

£2,495 ono

07977 939497



FORD FIESTA

2001, 82,000 miles, Black, MoT, CD player, new exhaust and clutch, overall good condition, must see.

£300 ono.

07574 285330.



RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE DCI

2005(55), 99,950 miles, silver, abs, e/w, alarm, MoT Sept 2018, central locking, pas, diesel, sunroof, alloys, CD. Good condition.

£995 ono.

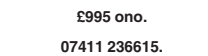
07411 236615.



SKODIA OCTAVIA DIESEL

Red, much loved, reliable Family car. Spacious with a good service history, 55 plate, 107,000 miles, MoT to August 2018, one owner since new.

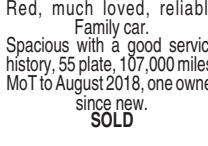
SOLD



SKODIA OCTAVIA DIESEL

Red, much loved, reliable Family car. Spacious with a good service history, 55 plate, 107,000 miles, MoT to August 2018, one owner since new.

SOLD



SKODIA OCTAVIA DIESEL

Red, much loved, reliable Family car. Spacious with a good service history, 55 plate, 107,000 miles, MoT to August 2018, one owner since new.

SOLD



SKODIA OCTAVIA DIESEL

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or 0121 557 0400.
Oldbury Area.

Vehicles Wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

alan reed cars

Used cars wanted for cash Top prices paid. HP settled. Buyer could call.

01562 711083 / 07831 245313



WANTED ROVER 214

1995, Three door SEI Night fire red, electric windows, fsh, metallic paint, sunroof

01234 261531

9 Local Information

Public & Legal Notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to **Marie Hogg on 01902 713146** or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk (remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

Personal

FREE TEXT MESSAGES from women wanting discreet ADULT FUN! Call 01216 202445 for full details. Discretion assured!



HELLO LADIES

Retired gentleman 60's
Honest, loyal, genuine, tall, average build, car owner, modern, happy guy, GSOH, likes most things in life WLM slim to average genuine lady for dates and possible romance, approx 10 mile radius of Stour-bridge.

Box Number P20966 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.



MALE MID 60's
Slimish, likes sports, countryside.
WLM Country type lady, slim. For companionship, hopefully leading to spending rest of lives together.

Box Number P20972 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.



WIDOW RETIRED
Would like to meet male/female Friends for holidays, weekends away, days out, Wednesday and surrounding areas.

Box Number P20971 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

BOOK YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS OR FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLINE AT

bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

and become one of hundreds of customers who regularly receive exclusive special offers & discounts.



Classified Ads

SEPTEMBER PART EXCHANGES NOW HERE!

ADAM			WAS	NOW	INSIGNIA & CASCADA		
14/14	ADAM SLAM 1.4 100PS 3DR RED N ROLL 41,000 MILES		£7,495	£7,195	14/14	INSIGNIA SRI 1.8 5DR CARBON FLASH 21,000 MILES	£8,795
16/66	ADAM SLAM 1.4 3DR LET IT BLUE 12,000 MILES		£9,995	£9,495	15/65	INSIGNIA SRI NAV 2.0CDTI 140ps 5DR CARBON FLASH 19,000 MILES	£11,695
CORSA & VIVA					15/65	INSIGNIA SRI NAV 1.6 CDTI 5DR SUMMIT WHITE 14,300 MILES	£11,895
17/17	VIVA SL 1.0 EASYTRONIC AUTO SOVEREIGN SILVER 300 MILES			£9,995	13/13	CASCADA ELITE 2.0CDTI ASTEROID GREY 43,000 MILES LEATHER TRIM	£10,995
11/61	CORSA SRI 1.4 5DR ASTEROID GREY 33,000 MILES			£6,495	14/14	CASCADA SE 2.0CDTI DEEP SKY BLUE 10,000 MILES ONLY	£11,895
15/15	CORSA EXCITE 1.2 3DR FLAME RED 32,500 MILES			£6,995	MOKKA & MOKKA X		
15/15	CORSA LIMITED 1.4 TURBO 3DR FLAME RED 12,000 MILES		£8,995	£8,695	14/14	MOKKA EXCLUSIV 1.7CDTI 5DR BORACAY BLUE 24,000 MILES	£10,995
16/16	CORSA ENERGY 1.4 5DR FLAME RED 7,000 MILES "OUR OWN CAR"			£8,995	14/64	MOKKA SE 1.6 5DR DEEP ESPRESSO 33,600 MILES LEATHER TRIM	£9,995
16/16	CORSA LIMITED 1.4 3DR CARBON FLASH 7,600 MILES		£9,495	£9,195	14/64	MOKKA EXCLUSIV 1.6 5DR VELVET RED 27,000 MILES	£10,495
17/17	CORSA STING 1.4 3DR FLAME RED DELIVERY MILES LAST FEW REMAINING			£7,995	14/64	MOKKA TECHLINE 1.7CDTI 4X4 SOVEREIGN SILVER 44,700 MILES SAT NAV	£11,995
ASTRA					14/64	MOKKA SE 1.4T VELVET RED 16,000 MILES SAT NAV & LEATHER TRIM	£12,495
11/11	ASTRA SRI 1.7CDTI 125ps 5DR TECHNICAL GREY 37,500 MILES 1 OWNER			£6,495	15/65	MOKKA EXCLUSIV 1.6CDTI 5DR CARBON FLASH 11,500 MILES	£12,995
12/12	ASTRA ACTIVE 1.4 5DR ASTEROID GREY 31,500 MILES			£6,495	17/66	MOKKA X DESIGN NAV 1.4T SUMMIT WHITE 9,900 MILES	£15,495
13/63	ASTRA SRI 1.6 5DR OLYMPIC WHITE 26,500 MILES			£7,995	17/66	MOKKA X ELITE 1.4T AUTOMATIC 5DR SOVEREIGN SILVER 7,600 MILES LEATHER TRIM	£16,995
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Proof of the 'hybrid' pudding was discovered in Charles Clark event!



Toyota's hybrid range tested in challenge

Charles Clark Toyota are so confident that the Toyota hybrid models range offer a better way to drive than their competitors with conventional engines that they held a Hybrid Challenge event at Wolverhampton Wanderers FC Stadium.

Customers were invited to be the judge and test drive from the selected Toyota Hybrid models ranging from the: C-HR, RAV4, Yaris, Prius or a Prius plug-in and in turn driving the competition's comparative model to evaluate the smooth drive, fuel economy and running costs for each.

Each driver had an hour's slot where they drove the vehicles on a varied route of urban and motorway driving, putting each car through its paces in the different driving



Tester David Brown and salesman Michael Mahrra

arenas. You could say it's was not much of a challenge especially with the Toyota's unique hybrid system and its ability to recycle energy that other car models normally waste, you can benefit from fuel economy of up to 94mpg.

Toyota's Hybrid also benefit from up to 30 per cent less servicing costs and up to 40 per cent better fuel economy than the competitors models, better still that's up to 40 per cent better fuel efficiency than an equivalent diesel engine.

So you won't just enjoy the drive. You'll enjoy the savings, too. That's better. And that's not all. You'll save on maintenance, too. About 30 per cent less maintenance costs when compared to a non-hybrid. That's because hybrid vehicles have less wear and tear on items like brake discs and tyres, and you don't have a clutch.

Toyota are in fact the world leaders in hybrid technology and there are more than nine million hybrid drivers worldwide.

The latest Toyota Hybrid launched in January 2017 the C-HR Hybrid Dynamic car has an average fuel consumption of 72.4 - 74.3 mpg and CO2 emissions of 86-87g/km.

A majority of the test drivers said that the Toyota Hybrids were their choice for driveability and eco friendliness.

*All mpg and CO2 figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect the attendees actual driving experience.

Morgan: Britain's oldest family-owned car maker

Nestled within the Malvern hills lies Morgan – one of the oldest-surviving car manufacturers in the UK. Established in 1909 by H F S Morgan with the creation of the original three-wheeler, it only moved to four wheels in 1936 – and things have stayed pretty much the same ever since. It's now the last family-owned British motor manufacturer – and family values are still visible throughout the build process.

With coach building at its heart, Morgan is a company that keeps traditional values at the forefront, using classic building techniques as well as ultra-modern processes. It's this combination that has ensured Morgan's popularity – and it now builds well in excess of 1,000 cars a year, with order books near constantly full.

With three distinct ranges – 3, Wheeler, Classic and Aero – the Morgan list of cars is as varied as the processes that are used to create them. And with the vast majority of creation and manufacture taking place in-house, there's a distinct sense of family to the entire operation. It feels worlds away from the robot-controlled production methods that are used by modern manufacturers.

Iconic

We were let off the leash to discover the ins and outs of Morgan's factory – as well as get the chance to meet some of the people who help create such iconic cars.

The process starts with a chassis. It's made from bonded aluminium, which creates a stiff foundation for the entire car. This first room sees the wiring loom fitted, along with the fuel tank – you could even start the car here if you wanted to.

These chassis are brought in from a company in Birmingham – a relatively short trip from Malvern. This process is used to create the 'modern' Morgan cars – classic versions use a combination of aluminium and ash. It may be an old-school material to use but it ensures incredible lightness, as well as making these cars surprisingly eco-friendly.

Those classic models employ a chassis created from ash pieces that are pre-cut in a mill on site. The pieces are then glued and pre-assembled, after which they are hand-finished and treated for longevity.

Morgan cars use a variety of engines from established manufacturers. The Plus 4, for instance, utilises a 2.0-litre engine from Ford while the larger Aero 8 uses a powerful BMW-sourced 4.8-litre V8. These engines are an intricate part of the entire car – so it's no wonder that Morgan chooses reliable, well-trusted powerplants for its vehicles.

With each new section of the build process comes a new smell. The tin shop, for instance, smells – unsurprisingly – of metal, while the wood shop – our next stop – smells just like an old woodwork classroom, or a D&T room for younger readers.



In the cabin everything is stitched by hand, although some elements may be aided by computers



There are no shrouds, no frosted glass windows, everything is in plain sight and simple to understand



The process starts with a chassis, made from bonded aluminium, which creates a stiff foundation for the car

All Morgan cars rely upon some form of hand-worked wood element. Technicians here use hand tools to get each piece spot on before it's used in a vehicle, though some modern techniques such as vacuum bonding are also used.

Morgan has original wood plans dating back to the 1950s – and it can still make one that way today.

Using ash means that each car is able to absorb bumps in the road, giving it a better ride than you'd expect.

An amazing tool that's used to create the classic model's wheel arches is a jig made entirely from oak – and it's been there so long that the vast majority of people working at Morgan don't know when it was installed. The ash is left in there for around half a day, and is a classic version of the modern vacuum pressing method.

Whereas many manufacturers use wood veneer, Morgan uses the real thing. Each interior dashboard piece can be tailored to a customer's specification but it's always all-wood rather than plastic.

The level of personalisation on offer is hard to get your head around. Seats can be trimmed in a variety of different leathers and can be embossed with the Morgan logo – or even a customer's name, should they want it applied.

Everything is stitched by hand, although some elements are aided by computers.

Similar to the car's use of modern engines with traditional building materials, each

manufacturer process is a seamless blend of the new and old.

Of course, there's one three-wheeled addition that we haven't mentioned just yet. The original three-wheeler was Morgan's first car, with production starting shortly after the end of the First World War in 1918. It used a two-speed transmission and remained in production until the early 1930s.

Process

The modern 3 Wheeler certainly has the looks and build of the original, with a V-Twin motor sitting proudly at the front of the vehicle and weighing in at just 525kg.

However, these vehicles are created in a separate part of the factory and have their own dedicated production line. Because the build process is so far removed from that of the standard Morgan cars, it was decided that it needed its own area – and that's exactly what it got. It's proved immensely popular, and is selling in America as well as in Europe.

Thousands of people take a tour of the Morgan factory each year and it's easy to see why. There are no shrouds, no frosted glass windows, everything is in plain sight and simple to understand.

There's one word to describe Morgan: honest. If there's something that car manufacturers could use a little more of – especially in this day and age – it's honesty, and it's a feature that Morgan has by the bucketload.

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Charlemont Star pictured in 1976 with boss and founder Garth Thomas (top left)



Star line-up for a photo call during the 1988/89 campaign



Andrew Wilcoxson (back right) and his current squad on their most recent European tour



Past and present players gather at recent reunion

Star's still shining bright 60 years on

SIX decades on from their formation, Charlemont Star continue to give their players the chance to shine.

The amateur football club, based in West Bromwich, celebrated their 60th anniversary recently at Dartmouth Golf Club, where current and former players joined to share tales of their time with the Star.

They were formed in 1957 by Garth Thomas, who died in 2015. Over the years he retained a keen interest in the goings on and was kept regularly updated.

An extract from Thomas' memoirs read: "Up until I was 23 my routine was to have a kick about with local teenagers at Bird End. Gradually those got longer, so one Saturday afternoon in July the lads suggested we start a team. At the time I only gave it a week or so believing it would be a seven-day novelty."

Consistent

The club have been blessed with commitment and consistent management, firstly under Thomas, before Baz Plant took up the reins in the 1980s. Current boss Andrew Wilcoxson joined the club in the mid 1990s, managing alongside Dave Stocking and Richard Cox, and has been sole manager since Star's reformation in 2010 following a brief break.

The club originally competed in the West Bromwich Sunday League, later named the Sandwell League. They regularly went toe-to-toe with rivals The Bush, Wones United, Prince Regent, White Swan and Churchfield Tavern in their early years.

For the most part of their existence, Charlemont's home base has been Hydes Road playing fields in Wednesbury. They have just secured permission to return to Churchfields playing fields in West Bromwich for the current campaign. Hamstead Hill has also been another home.

An array of former players returned for the club's latest milestone celebration. Plant, a re-

SPORTING FEATURE

By Lewis Cox

"It's giving lads the opportunity to play. It's organised. All they have to do is turn up and play."

tired schoolteacher, 60, who played and managed for around 15 years, said: "When I joined there were various characters from the around the Stone Cross and Charlemont area. John Garnzarek, who has sadly died, Keith Willetts, Jimmy Young - they were the main characters, and they welcomed me whole-heartedly with Garth.

"Garth was larger than life in more ways than one. A big guy, 20 stone plus. I had a yellow Mini when I started and he got in it and buckled the car door.

"We'd regularly finish seventh or eight in the league. We never got relegated despite finishing so low, even when finishing bottom! It's fantastic at the moment. The job that Andy's done is absolutely brilliant."

Wilcoxson described moving to the Birmingham Festival League as 'a shot in the arm' for the club. Star enjoyed success at the turn of the millennium, gaining promotion to Division Two alongside a couple of handy cup runs in the Birmingham County FA Junior Cup.

Their only time out of action was a brief break of four seasons between 2006 and 2010 before Wilcoxson launched the club again, attracting a new squad that entered the West Midlands Christian Football League.

In seven years they have provided opportunities to hundreds of youngsters both in the region and, remarkably for a local amateur side with one member of staff, on the continent.

Star head out on an annual European tour. Since their reformation they have been away to Germany, Austria and Norway, facing local

sides from their European counterparts. Star have forged close bonds with Bremen outfits TV Bremen-Walle and Bremer SV, whom they have played twice. They have also gone up against FT Gern, a youth club of German international Phillip Lahm, and Didi Hamann's ex-club FC Wacker Munchen.

The tours, organised by their boss, remain an attractive proposition to players, who enjoy both the social and competitive aspect of the club's set-up. They head out to Leipzig in Germany next May.

Wilcoxson, 48, from Telford, said: "It's giving lads the opportunity to play. It's organised. All they have to do is turn up and play. Everything's provided for them. They are grateful, they don't express it too often, it's nice when they say they appreciate what you do."

"I don't want 'thank you's and praise, you make memories and friends. It was nice at Garth's funeral with how many former members attended."

"Without Garth's commitment and dedication to the club it would have folded many years ago. There wouldn't be a Charlemont Star. He was always interested and helped us financially."

Oh his jet-setting side, the boss added: "Many of the games stick in my mind because they're good, competitive matches. Then there's the memories and camaraderie with our hosts after the games."

"The standard of football there, at amateur level, is well-organised but player-for-player, they're close. Though we've picked a few anomalies where they've been quite a bit better than us!"

The future looks bright for Star, who are sponsored by Attewell Opticians and also the Red Lion pub in West Bromwich, with whom they have just struck a new partnership.

The club are always on the lookout for new players, and are particularly in search for a goalkeeper for the current campaign. Anybody interested in supporting, sponsorship, coaching or playing can contact Wilcoxson by emailing ajwilco@sky.com.

Fan favourite Lescott makes return to city

JOLEON Lescott is on his way back to Wolverhampton for a special night with fans in December. Lescott remains a popular figure in the city thanks to his time at Wolves where he started his career after joining as a trainee. He was part of the Wolves side which won promotion to the Premier League for the first time in their history in 2003 at Cardiff and played more than 220 games before moving to Everton. He will talk about his career and meet fans at the Cleveland Arms, Stow Heath Lane, on December 7.

After three years on Merseyside, Lescott went on to win two Premier League titles, an FA Cup and a League Cup at Manchester City before spells back in the West Midlands at Albion and Villa.

It will be the first time the former England international, who won 24 caps, has done a stage appearance and he will be alongside former Wolves promotion-winning team-mate Matt Murray. VIP tickets, to include a meet and greet, buffet, priority seating and signed photo, are on sale at clevelanddarms.com or the venue, by phone 01902 451021. Standard tickets are £12.

Heathens heroes sign up for Golden Hammer

TWO modern-day Cradley heroes are already on board for the 2017 F.A.S.T Golden Hammer on October 23.

Ashley Morris and Max Clegg are the first two riders confirmed for the famous individual event taking place at Wolverhampton's Monmore Green at 7.30pm.

Current captain Tom Perry is also expected to be a part of the line-up. Heathens club chairman Nigel Pearson said: "We're delighted we can now round off the year with the Golden Hammer."

"Having Ash and Max as the first two confirmed names is a great way to start building the line-up."

He added: "We've been able to schedule it for the Monday of the half-term school holidays and therefore we are delighted to offer free admission to children aged 12 and under."

Admission prices are £15 for adults, concessions £10, £5 for 13-to-18-year-olds and free for under-12s.

Doyle retires over concussion fears

FORMER Wolves striker Kevin Doyle has announced his retirement from football - after repeated incidents of concussion. The 34-year had been playing in the MLS for Colorado Rapids and took advice from consultants.

Republic of Ireland international Doyle was Wolves' record signing when he moved to Molineux for £6.5million from Reading at the start of the 2009/10 season.

Doyle played a starring role as Mick McCarthy's side avoided relegation from the Premier League, scoring nine goals in 34 appearances. He would stay with the club until 2015 when, after loan spells with Crystal Palace and QPR, he signed for Colorado. In all he netted 33 times in 179 Wolves games, his most memorable goal arguably the winner in a famous 2-1 victory over Sir Alex Ferguson's Manchester United in 2011.

In a statement, Doyle said heading the ball had become 'problematic' and that two concussions this season alone have forced him to take medical advice.



Boss claims future bleak for Heathens

FEARS are rising over the future of Cradley Heathens.

Hot on the heels of club director Nigel Pearson hinting at a winter exit from the club after eight years at the helm, co-boss Gary Patchett says next season's plans could be out of their hands.

The reborn Heathens who made a stunning return to the sport, sharing with Wolverhampton and Birmingham in 2010. But with no immediate prospect of a home to call their own next year, track sharing is again the only option.

It could mean that their final two meetings – both at Monmore – against Eastbourne on October 16 and the FAST Golden Hammer a week later could be their final action of the modern era.

"They were difficult this year, but we pulled a rabbit out of the hat with the double-headers, which have been reasonably successful," said Patchett.

"But running at Birmingham isn't much fun for the supporters. We are grateful for the fact that we were able to race there, but it's hard.

"And with the likelihood of new owners at Birmingham, then they could be running two teams there.

"We may be putting two and two together and coming up with five, but it may be that Perry Barr is not an option.

"Then we have the AGM to come and from what I'm hearing, and with Lake-side looking to return to the Premiership, they may come up with a 10-team league and four more home fixtures for Wolves. That's four more Mondays we can't have. We might be scuppered."

Bishop first back for blue hoops in home race Shocker

ATHLETES from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club didn't have to travel far to race at the weekend. In fact the distance from the club to the venue was actually shorter than the race itself, prompting some to run from the club to the race, run it hard, and then run back.

The venue was Enville Hall and the race was the 10k Action Heart promoted Sheepwalks Shocker.

With the race on the doorstep there were plenty of blue hoops in attendance. Darran Bishop put his marathon training to good use coming home in 10th place in 41.34 with Dave Norman in 16th in 43.49. Helen Tromans put her excellent ability to descend quickly to good use to win the ladies race in 45.49, taking 25th place overall. Andrew Weaver was 57th in 50.48, Hannah McGuire finished in 53.52 to take 91st place, Carol Fisher was 125th in 56.49, Jane Campbell 190th in 1.03.01 and Tracey O'Donoghue was 262nd in 1.11.05 with Karen Flint finishing a position behind in the same time.

Elsewhere, Jacqui Elson-Whittaker claimed 5844 place in the Cardiff Half marathon in a time of 1.57.55.

Glassboys go second after cup progress

Stourbridge 2 Coalville 1

STOURBRIDGE moved up to second in the Evo-Stik Premier thanks to Jordan Archer's last-minute winner on Monday night.

It looked as if the Glassboys would have to settle for a point until Archer controlled a pass from substitute Danny O'Callaghan and rifled home as the game entered stoppage time.

Stourbridge, who had won eight of their last 10 in all competitions heading into the match, took the lead in the 34th minute, Matt Dodd firing

home. Coalville equalised eight minutes into the second period as Lee Cox finished off Blair Anderson's cross at the back post.

Stourbridge 3 Alfreton 1

STOURBRIDGE will entertain Macclesfield in the fourth qualifying round of the FA Cup on October 14.

Progress was made on Saturday thanks in no small part to referee Scott Simpson, who sent off two Alfreton players in the opening 24 minutes.

The National League North side saw Tom Allan

and Bradley Wood dismissed before Tom Tonks fired home a 20-yard free-kick for the opener.

Stourbridge increased the lead on 57 minutes, Josh Green netting from close range. But Alfreton were thrown a lifeline six minutes later when Glassboys defender Darryl Westlake was judged to have handled and former Walsall player Craig Westcarr converted from the spot.

It led to a nervous finish before long-serving Leon Broadhurst headed home with three minutes left.

Byfield is in home corner at The Venue

HOMETOWN favourite Les Byfield will undertake a six-rounder when professional boxing returns to The Venue in Dudley later this month.

He will share top billing with Lichfield's Brad Foster on the 'Knocked For Six' bill at the High Street venue on Friday, October 20.

It will mark Byfield's first step up from four rounds, while Foster returns to the ring for a third straight six-rounder.

Netherton's Byfield, aged 30, is again set to take on long-haul campaigner Andy Harris, after a first meeting between the two super featherweights was postponed.

'The Minefield' has been out of action for three months waiting to take on the 35-year-old veteran from Gloucestershire, who has 56 pro bouts under his belt.

He is still unbeaten in seven outings after a draw with Brett Fido on June 24. He's won six times, with a first round TKO in one victory.

Birmingham's Kane Baker and Walsall's Shaun Cooper will also occupy the home corner for four-round contests, with further bouts still to be added.

Tickets, priced at £35 and £50 ringside with waitress service, are available now by calling 07976 283 157. Alternatively, contact any of the boxers in the home corner on Facebook.

At Walsall Town Hall last weekend, Kingswinford super welterweight, Danny Ball recorded a points win over MJ Hall.

Eggington named young boxer of year

SAM EGGINGTON has been named the Boxing Writers' Club's Young Boxer of the Year.

The 23-year-old welterweight, from Stourbridge, finished ahead of super-featherweight Zelfa Barrett in the poll for 2017's award.

Eggington impressively ended the career of former world champion Paulie Malignaggi in March and in May stopped Spain's Ceferin Rodriguez in 10 rounds to win the European title. He defends his title tomorrow night (Friday) against Mohamed Mimoun of France and receives his award at the organisation's 66th annual dinner on Sunday.

YELTZ PICK UP A VITAL POINT

Barwell 1 Halesowen 1

YELTZ got a valuable point in Leicestershire on Tuesday night – but stay bottom – in a game which saw both sides reduced to ten men.

Halesowen were desperate for a confidence boost ahead of the No9 derby with Stourbridge this weekend. And they started well with Jack Kelly looking dangerous early on.

Daniel Udoh played Oliver Finney in on 21 minutes but his shot hit the side netting and then Halesowen goalkeeper Daniel Platt was twice called into action to make good saves.

On 37 minutes Barwell were down to ten men when Declan Towers received a straight red for a foul on Halesowen defender Kalern Thomas.

Halesowen pressed with a man advantage, but allowed the hosts to take the lead through Kyle Perry after 58 minutes.

The Yeltz battled on and captain Danny Bragoli headed just over on 66 minutes from a corner before Kelly equalised with an excellent free-kick into the top corner.

Ten minutes from time, Alexander Woodhouse was sent off for Halesowen for a second booking.

Halesowen 1 Workington 5

ROCK bottom Halesowen started brightly but collapsed to a thumping 5-1 defeat on Saturday.

The Yeltz took a fifth minute lead when Daniel Udoh shot past Aaron Taylor from 20 yards.

But Workington gradually took control to establish a half-time lead. Scott Allison slotted home his seventh goal of the season after 35 minutes and the Reds were in front just four minutes later when Jack Egan looped home a header off the post following terrible confusion between goalkeeper Dan Platt and defender Jack Kelly.

The Yeltz defence fell apart again after the interval as Workington hit two more goals in the first six minutes. Conor Tinnion sliced an initial shot, but Egan was on hand to slam home his second after 48 minutes. Workington's fourth was a real cracker, a volley from David Symington on 51st minutes. Jordan Holt completed Yeltz's misery in stoppage time.

Overseas ace signs on again



Dylan Ross-Watt confirms with Halesowen CC lead coach Richard Cox his return for 2018

OVERSEAS player Dylan Ross-Watt has signed on at Halesowen Cricket Club again for the 2018 season.

The club is delighted to have secured the services of the South African quick bowler, who took 52 wickets at 14.96 each and averaged 36.83 with the bat in the 2017 season.

The players' and fans' player of the year was instrumental in the promotion race. Hales moved quickly to secure his services for the third season in a row. The 24-year-old said: "I am delighted to be coming back – in fact I don't even view myself as the overseas visitor any more, it just feels like my club to me." Hales

sowen will move on to assessing their plans for life in Birmingham League Division One following promotion, but will also look at the make up of the other teams to build a stronger future based on local and home grown players.

Lead coach Richard Cox said: "We agreed a while back that continuity was key in as many areas as possible. We know we have been doing the right things for sometime now and sooner or later the rewards would come. Part of that was getting the right type of people in place around the club and Dylan epitomises that.

"He's been instrumental in leading many aspects and we think of him as a Halesowen boy."

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